

Harlescott Junior School

Featherbed Lane, Shrewsbury, SY1 4QN

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- In 2013 the school results show that at the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is above the 2012 average at Level 4 for reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' attainment is above the 2012 average for Level 5 in writing and mathematics. These results are a significant improvement on those of a year ago.
- Attainment has risen and progress is now good for all year groups because of good teaching, effective monitoring and use of robust pupil information by teachers to carefully match work to pupils' starting points.
- Effective training for all staff ensures that teaching assistants contribute strongly to the good progress pupils now make.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. Relationships are good between pupils and staff.
- The headteacher communicates a clear vision for the school and works determinedly to ensure the school is the best it can be. The senior leadership team and middle leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning. They identify and ensure that good practice is effectively shared.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough teaching that is outstanding.
- Pupils' progress in writing has improved but it is not yet as consistently good as progress in reading and mathematics in all year groups.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Nine observations were made jointly with the senior leadership team. A group of pupils took inspectors on a walk around the school to look at displays and their work. Inspectors listened to a small group of pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, the Chair of the governing body and other governors.
- The views of parents who responded to Parent view, the online questionnaire, were analysed. Inspectors took into account the views of parents who spoke to the inspection team. The results of 27 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors analysed the 2012, 2011 and 2010 end of Key Stage 2 results and the unvalidated results from 2013. They analysed the school's data on the progress pupils had made from their starting points and their current progress. Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the minutes of meetings, curriculum plans, records relating to safeguarding and behaviour and data on attendance and exclusions. They looked at the school's self-evaluation and the school's improvement plans.

Inspection team

Michelle Parker, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alan Jarvis

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average junior school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few pupils are from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is more than double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and pupils from service families is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of teaching which is outstanding so that all pupils make rapid progress by:
 - ensuring that pupils have opportunities to practise and build their writing skills in all writing tasks.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- At the time of the previous inspection, attainment in Year 6 was in decline in both English and mathematics and the school did not meet the government's floor standards. Attainment in Year 6 has improved markedly over the last two years. In 2012 it was above the national average for English and mathematics for Level 4 and above. Over the last year improvement is most evident in the proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 in writing and mathematics.
- In 2012, the proportion of pupils that made expected progress in English and mathematics matched national expectations. Expected results this year show further improvement and more pupils have made accelerated progress.
- Current work in pupils' books, exploring topics in geography, history and science, especially in Years 5 and 6, shows that pupils are working at above average standards.
- The strong results in reading are largely because of the carefully structured daily reading sessions. Pupils are encouraged to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read unfamiliar words and decode their meaning. Both teachers and teaching assistants check pupils' understanding as they read to them and quickly identify and address any problems. This ensures all pupils make good progress in developing their understanding and in extending their vocabulary.
- Pupils talk with confidence about the characters in the book they are reading. The wide range of both fiction and non-fiction and the use of e-books have ensured that pupils enjoy reading widely and independently. The development of pupils' reading is a strong feature in all lessons, especially topic work.
- Pupils' writing has improved. There are plenty of opportunities in all subjects to write at length. Written work is well presented and carefully structured and reflects pupils' good reading skills in developing and widening pupils' vocabulary. Opportunities are sometimes missed to ensure that pupils use their new learning in their next piece of writing. Drama is used very effectively to deepen pupils' understanding of what might drive characters' actions. Year 6 pupils used role play to gain insight into Macbeth's motivation for murdering Duncan.
- Pupils have a good understanding of number, shape, space and measure and they enjoy solving numerical problems. They organise their work well and can use mathematical language accurately to explain their thinking.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs attain better than those groups nationally. This is because the school carefully identifies individual pupils' needs and designs work to address them well. Pupils enjoy tasks on the computer which support their learning in mathematics and reading. They enable pupils to practise their information and communications technology skills and identify clearly the areas they know well and those they need to concentrate on to improve.
- The progress of pupils' eligible for the pupil premium has greatly improved. At the time of the last inspection their attainment in English and mathematics was one year behind that of other pupils in the school; currently it is one term behind. This is because the pupil premium is spent wisely to provide effective additional support for individuals and small groups to boost their progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan interesting and exciting work for pupils. The pace of learning is appropriately matched to the activities and allows pupils to concentrate and deepen their understanding. Lessons are characterised by pupils absorbed in activities which they find interesting and which enable them to build on the knowledge which they bring to tasks.
- Pupils enjoy learning and their views are used to plan topic work. They work well in groups and

listen well to each other and the teacher. Teachers' questioning encourages pupils to express their thoughts well. Teachers identify gaps in pupils' understanding or misconceptions, and reshape learning to address them effectively.

- All work is well presented and neat. Teachers ensure that handwriting is consistently good and meets the school's high expectation. Pupils are taught to shape letters accurately and systematically develop joined up writing. Pupils begin writing with ink once their writing is of the required standard and this encourages pupils to strive to form letters clearly from an early stage.
- The work provided for different groups is accurately matched to pupils' needs. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed because they are involved in teachers' planning and so have an accurate understanding of the learning needs of pupils and learning objectives. This ensures that pupils working in small groups are well supported and make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have an accurate view of the National Curriculum level that pupils are working at. Pupils' progress is tracked conscientiously by teachers. Regular meetings are held with teachers and the headteacher and senior staff to monitor pupils' progress. This ensures that work in English and mathematics is at the right level to provide appropriate challenge to all groups of pupils.
- Teachers' marking is of a high standard. All books are regularly marked with detailed advice on the next steps in learning. At the start of each lesson pupils make corrections and act on the suggestions for improvement made by teachers. All work is marked for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Teachers ensure that pupils' learning of topics in mathematics is secure before moving on. In English, opportunities are sometimes missed to practise and consolidate pupils' skills in future writing tasks.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well. Their good behaviour is reinforced through each class's own behaviour code. Pupils understand and are committed to keeping to the rules because they have written them. They use them to encourage each other to behave well. School buddies in Year 5 are used effectively at break and lunch times to strengthen pupils' respect for one another and friendships.
- Pupils and families have a positive attitude to school and learning. This is reflected in the improvement in attendance. Instances of pupils taking holidays during term time are rare.
- Pupils are well mannered and courteous to each other, staff and visitors alike. Relationships are respectful. Pupils said bullying was rare and dealt with swiftly. Pupils feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe. They know how to use social networking sites and mobile phone technology sensibly.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides calm, consistently good leadership. She has identified the talent within the staff and nurtured it well to provide good leadership at all levels. Consequently all staff understand and promote the school's ethos well.
 - Teaching has improved because of the rigorous, week by week monitoring of planning and pupils' learning coupled with high quality training which is linked to the needs of individual staff. Teachers' performance is monitored and a system is in place to link pupils' achievement to teachers' pay appropriately.
 - Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced an on-line system for tracking pupils' progress, which is used well by teachers to help them to plan lessons. All staff accurately assess and record the standard of pupils' work. This enables the school's managers to monitor reliably the attainment and progress of pupil groups in each year.
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- Self-evaluation is robust and provides a secure basis for improvement. School leaders understand what the school needs to do to improve and communicate priorities to all staff clearly.
 - The curriculum is broad and balanced and builds effectively on the interests of all pupils. Topic work encourages pupils to apply their learning in English, mathematics and science in ways which combine to reinforce their skills and understanding of each subject. Teachers use the programmes of study to ensure there is appropriate coverage of all subjects and good progression and application of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are identified well. All pupils understand and can talk about the current 'value' for the month, which is 'hope', because it is incorporated into all aspects of school life and their class learning.
 - The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
 - The local authority provides an appropriate level of support and challenge through its regular meetings with senior staff.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a detailed and accurate understanding of all aspects of the school's work. It is working towards Governor Mark accreditation. Governors have carried out an audit of their capabilities and training needs and reorganised their committees to make best use of governors' skills. The standards committee appropriately challenges the headteacher through questioning which probes information relating to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. Governors have an accurate view of teaching and the link to teachers' performance and pay. They understand how the pupil premium funding is spent and how it provides value for money. They evaluate the impact their work and understand how it improves the school.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123393
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	411284

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Price
Headteacher	Stephanie Peters
Date of previous school inspection	26-27 September 2011
Telephone number	01743 462087
Fax number	01743450182
Email address	head.hjs@shropshirelg.net

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