

Slater Primary School

Slater Street, Leicester, LE3 5AS

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Senior leaders set a very good example for staff and pupils. They constantly and successfully strive to improve the school and what it provides for each pupil.
- Staff work well together and share a common vision. Teamwork is strong.
- Governors carry out their role of challenging and supporting the school well. They are knowledgeable, experienced and astute.
- All aspects of the school have improved since the previous inspection. In 2013 the school had the best KS2 SATs results within the local authority.
- The school is a positive place of learning for staff and pupils. Training and professional development have a high priority.
- The quality of teaching is good and all groups achieve well. Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium now achieve as well as, if not slightly better than, those who are not.
- Attainment has risen considerably since the last inspection. Results of Year 6 national tests in 2013 were above those usually found in most other schools.
- All groups of pupils behave well in and out of lessons. Pupils are welcoming, friendly and well prepared for later life and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and a small proportion requires improvement.
- Current policies for English and mathematics are not always adopted or implemented consistently. This is particularly notable for handwriting in English and calculations in mathematics.
- Teachers sometimes focus more on the activities pupils do rather than what they learn. This slows the pace and pupils are not always fully engaged.
- Teachers do not always identify or address small errors or misunderstandings in pupils' work and bring these to their attention.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 13 lessons and a small support group, taught by eight teachers and a sports coach. Eleven of these observations were joint visits with senior staff.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, a representative from the local authority, senior and middle managers, as well as parents and carers.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire for a report to be available. The inspector received the views of parents and carers through 58 responses to a school survey, which used the same questions as those on the online Parent View questionnaire and informal discussions.
- The inspector received the views of staff through 16 responses to the inspection questionnaire and discussions, as well as views of pupils, through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, the school's development plan, planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Slater Street Primary School is much smaller than most other primary schools. Numbers in some classes, including Year 6 in 2012 and 2013, are particularly small.
- The school is very diverse ethnically. Pupils are from over 25 different nationalities and speak a range of 26 languages.
- The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is much higher than the national average. About a quarter of the pupils are at an early stage of learning English, this is a much higher proportion than in most other schools.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is much higher than in most schools. This is additional funding for specific groups of pupils, in this case those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils who start at the school after the Reception year or leave before Year 6 is much higher than in most other schools. Many of those joining the school have just come from abroad and some have had unsuccessful starts elsewhere.
- Three years ago the school was put into special measures because attainment was too low and leaders were not sufficiently effective in raising this. Since then there has been a new headteacher, a new deputy headteacher and a complete change of teaching staff. In February 2012 the school was found to be satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that these are consistently good and a greater proportion consistently outstanding by:
 - completing the revision of policies for teaching and learning, especially for handwriting and calculations, and ensuring that these are implemented consistently throughout the school
 - having an even stronger focus on learning throughout all lessons, so that pace is rapid and pupils are fully engaged
 - ensuring that the guidance teachers give to pupils, including through marking, clearly identifies errors and shows pupils how to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All groups of pupils achieve well. From low starting points in the Nursery or later in the school, pupils progress quickly because they are keen to learn, respond quickly to requests and are taught effectively. Over time there are no significant differences in the achievement of any group.
- The progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has risen recently. In 2013, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception year was higher than that found in the initial national pilot. Good teaching and a range of interesting, relevant activities both contribute well to this. Progress this term is good.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in 2012 was in line with the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The unvalidated data for 2013 show a similar picture. Achievement has risen, and continues to do so, because teaching has improved and pupils are keen to learn.
- The proportion of pupils doing well in the phonics test (the sounds which letters of the alphabet represent) for six-year-olds has been higher than the national average for the past two years because this is taught frequently and well.
- Following a dip in Year 6 attainment levels in 2011, they have risen steadily. In 2013, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above that usually found in most other schools. Despite lower starting points, pupils currently in Year 6 are all achieving well and are due to reach levels expected nationally at the end of this year.
- In 2012, attainment in mathematics was behind that of English, because a very small number of pupils had significant additional needs which were more apparent in this subject. The vast majority of pupils made significantly better than expected progress in both mathematics and English. Since then all groups of pupils continue to achieve well.
- Data show that, across the school, pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium are making similar and often better progress than their classmates as a result of the additional support they receive, and the gap in attainment in both English and mathematics is closing. Numbers of pupils in Year 6 are too small to report specifically on their attainment and progress without identifying individuals.
- The most-able pupils achieve well because staff have high expectations and most activities are highly engaging and open-ended. They are eager to learn and successfully rise to challenges such as working on more difficult activities with older pupils or taking responsibility to teach what they know to others. Both of these activities effectively stimulate and extend their progress.
- Pupils who have English as an additional language achieve well, because staff understand their needs and teach them effectively. They are also supported well by fellow pupils.
- Pupils who start at the school after the Reception Year achieve well because their needs are quickly assessed, understood and addressed. They enjoy working with adults and peers quickly choosing and settling at activities inside and outside. The parents and carers of some pupils who had joined the school from other schools reported how much progress their children had made since they had been at Slater Street and how appreciative they were of this.

- Pupils enjoy and progress well in sport, because they are taught clearly and well by specialist sports coaches, funded by primary school sports funding. For example, younger pupils were observed successfully developing their football skills, because the coach has good subject knowledge, a passion for the sport and high expectations for all pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching varies but is good overall. Some is outstanding and a small proportion requires improvement. None is inadequate.
- Sessions in the Early Years Foundation Stage are structured well, providing a good balance between activities taught by staff and those which children choose and pursue independently. Activities are interesting and practical, for example creative construction work using a wide variety of recycled materials and modelling with coloured dough and buttons. Teachers make their expectations clear and children apply themselves enthusiastically and behave well.
- Teachers throughout the school have high expectations for all. They effectively plan and adapt activities to meet individual needs, challenging the most able, overcoming difficulties for others and eradicating discrimination. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together in supporting pupils' learning and any emotional or behavioural difficulties.
- Almost all support is given in lessons inside the classroom, minimising any potential disruption of taking pupils out. Activities are varied well to meet individual needs and the skilled, experienced teaching assistants are sensitive and deployed well.
- Teachers inspire pupils' learning and motivation by using imaginative methods. For example, pupils in Year 3 were successfully motivated to learn about history through the use of drama. Pupils were actively involved in performing the story of King Arthur and then prompted and inspired by the most-able pupils demonstrating scenes and 'freezing' in key thought-provoking positions.
- Occasionally, teachers focus more on what pupils do, rather than on what they learn and achieve. In such lessons, the pace slows and pupils become slightly restless and disengaged.
- Teachers successfully include reading, writing, communication and mathematics through a range of subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 used computers well to research, discuss and answer questions in a guided reading lesson.
- Current policies provide a broad framework for approaches to teaching and learning which most, but not all, teachers follow. There is no clear guidance on handwriting and many pupils, including the most able, do not join letters until later in the school, which slows the writing of some. A very few staff do not teach calculations sufficiently clearly. These policies are currently being reviewed.
- Guidance, including marking, in and between lessons, is usually good. Occasionally, teachers do not look carefully enough at what pupils have done and miss opportunities to address errors and maximise achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop confidence, independence and positive attitudes to work because staff make expectations and routines consistent and clear. Parents and carers express appreciation of this, explaining that their children know what is expected at any stage of the day, which helps both confidence and behaviour.
- Pupils are kind, considerate and helpful to others in and out of lessons. Their welcome and support helps new pupils, including those with very limited English, to settle quickly and achieve well.
- Most pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 showed resilience and determination in drawing aerial maps of the locality. They all found this hard but persisted and progressed well, concentrating on their own work and supporting others with theirs.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying, including cyber bullying, prejudice-based bullying, verbal and physical bullying. They are very aware that bullying is persistent, intentionally unkind behaviour and that it is not tolerated in school. They feel safe because they know that behaviour is good and that friends and staff will help them whenever they need it.
- The actions and attitudes of pupils with challenging behaviour are improving greatly because staff have high expectations, make routines and expectations very clear, and take firm action on unacceptable behaviour. During the inspection, pupils whose behaviour had been poor when they joined the school were seen settled, calm and working attentively.
- Attendance has risen and is in line with the national average. Persistent absence has decreased and is rare. Punctuality is improving and lessons are not disrupted by late comers.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through assemblies, special events and projects such as 'Angels' and 'We are Britain', an engaging topic on historical and current diversity in Leicester.
- All the parents and carers who responded to the school survey felt that their children were safe. Almost all were happy with behaviour. One voiced the opinions of most by saying: 'Wonderful school, lovely teachers, my children couldn't be happier.'
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs at lunch times and after school, including sports clubs funded through Primary sports funding.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has driven improvements exceedingly well. With the full support of the governing body, she has eradicated inadequate teaching, made successful appointments and, along with other leaders, improved the quality of teaching overall. Professional development of all staff, including those who are new, is central to the school.
- The roles and impact of subject and other leaders have increased greatly since the previous inspection. Together they provide a rich, relevant experiences and activities which help prepare all pupils well for later life and learning.

- Teamwork is strong. All members of the school play a valuable part in pupils' successful achievement and well-being. Despite the transience of some pupils, this is a happy, cohesive, inclusive school. Several parents and carers expressed appreciation of the accessibility and helpfulness of all staff.
- Monitoring and self-evaluation are detailed and accurate. The school's capacity to improve is good because all leaders have successfully driven improvements. All areas identified for development at the previous inspection have been addressed well.
- Assessments are frequent, detailed, accurate and used well. Teachers are held accountable for the progress of all pupils in their class. Achievement throughout the school is clear and transparent.
- Staff are very positive about the school. They appreciate the support and challenge of the headteacher, her frankness and honesty and how she always helps them to move forward.
- There are positive and effective partnerships with other organisations and professionals. These are used well to extend pupils' experiences and promote their learning and well-being. For example, the primary sports funding is used well to enhance lessons and provide a variety of popular sports clubs at lunchtime and after-school clubs.
- Officers from the local authority have been effectively involved in improving the school. They work well with leaders, providing external validation and support. They are well aware of challenges which the mobility, transience and low starting points of pupils present and are committed to continue their partnership with the school in the future.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors are experienced and well trained. All their statutory duties, including those for safeguarding, are securely met. They know the school well and have a good understanding about the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving compared with other schools through regular visits and reports. They strongly support and challenge leaders and are fully involved in school improvement, building on strengths and tackling any underperformance. They appreciate how effective and proactive the headteacher is, and challenge and support her well.
 - Governors manage school finances diligently and effectively, know how pupil premium funding is used, and are pleased with the positive impact this has on achievement and well-being. They have secure structures for rewarding staff, overseeing the performance and salary of the headteacher and other staff and manage these well. They ensure that equal opportunities are securely promoted and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

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	120101
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	424995

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Cundill
Headteacher	Cheryl Henderson
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2012
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