

# Leavesden Green JMI School & Nursery

High Road, Leavesden, Watford, WD25 7QZ

**Inspection dates** 17–18 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Not enough teaching is good or better.
- Sometimes, leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching are too generous
- Teachers do not always give pupils clear ways to improve their work when they mark their books.
- Teachers do not always match the work set precisely to pupils' abilities, so some groups of pupils are not making good progress.
- Pupils are not doing as well in mathematics as they are in reading and writing.
- School leaders do not always identify underachievement at a sufficiently early stage to provide effective support.
- Governors do not challenge senior staff strongly enough over the achievement of different groups of pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and friendly.
- Pupils feel safe in school.
- The school helps parents understand what their children are being taught.
- Children are doing well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are making good progress.
- Pupils attend school regularly and persistent absence is rare.
- Phonics teaching (the use of sounds to build words) is consistently good.
- The school organises a wide range of activities to help pupils develop their personal skills.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors watched 13 lessons. Several were observed jointly with a senior leader.
- Inspectors met senior leaders, subject leaders, 2 groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector also spoke with a senior leader from a nearby secondary school over the telephone.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of evidence including: the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plan; records of local authority support visits; records of teachers’ performance; the analysis of pupils’ progress; pupils’ work; and records relating to the behaviour and safety of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the 52 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took into account responses to an inspection questionnaire by 22 staff.

## Inspection team

Neil Stanley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Leavesden Green JMI School and Nursery is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of the pupils supported by the pupil premium is slightly below average. This additional funding is for particular groups of pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- A small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more teaching is good or outstanding by making sure that:
  - lessons are planned with a range of activities that fully involve and challenge pupils of all abilities
  - work is marked in detail and pupils have regular opportunities to respond to teachers' comments and make improvements
  - senior leaders and subject leaders make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching and give teachers more help on how to improve.
- Raise standards and quickly tackle any instances of underachievement, particularly in mathematics by:
  - using the systems for tracking pupils' progress more effectively to identify individuals and groups of pupils who are falling behind, including pupils supported by the pupil premium
  - promptly providing extra help so that these pupils catch up.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on the school's performance by:
  - using additional financial resources effectively, particularly funding received through the pupil premium, so that eligible pupils make accelerated progress
  - monitoring the progress made by groups of pupils more closely and tackling underachievement more quickly
  - making sure that the governing body holds senior leaders to account for the performance of different groups of learners in all subjects.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because individuals and groups of pupils do not make consistently good progress in the school. Although standards of achievement in the school in 2013 were slightly better than in 2012, this improvement is insufficiently rapid and sustained.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make uneven progress in the school compared with other groups of pupils and similar pupils nationally. This is because lesson activities do not always support them to make accelerated progress. These pupils are typically three terms behind their classmates.
- Pupils entitled to the pupil premium make inconsistent progress in the school. Generally, their progress is stronger in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1, particularly in writing. As a result, although by the time they leave the school, the gaps with their classmates are beginning to close, this is not happening quickly enough. This is because school leaders do not check the effectiveness of pupil premium funding on individuals' progress early enough to make changes if it is not having the intended impact. These pupils are typically two terms behind their classmates. In 2012 they were less than one term behind their classmates in English but three terms behind them in mathematics.
- The progress of more-able pupils is uneven in the school. At Key Stage 1, too many of these pupils do not achieve the highest levels. However, at Key Stage 2, these numbers are beginning to improve.
- Pupils join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with standards that are typically in line with national expectations, although a small minority at this stage have speech and language difficulties. By the start of Key Stage 1, the gaps between these pupils and their classmates have narrowed. They build on their social skills and make typically good progress in their language and number skills. This is because of consistently good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In the first year of the phonics screening check, the school's results were well above those expected. Although the results dipped slightly in the second year, they compare favourably with national standards. This is because phonics is taught consistently well across the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards are in line with those typical of their age group. Most read fluently and enthusiastically. However, the proportion of pupils gaining the highest levels is slightly smaller than would be expected given their starting points. This is because lesson activities do not always precisely match individual learners' needs.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards remain in line with national expectations. However, attainment and progress in mathematics is significantly weaker than in reading, and especially in writing, where progress is much stronger. Pupils do not always have the confidence to solve challenging problems. This is because teaching does not always equip them with a wide enough range of strategies to tackle challenges in mathematics.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in the school, compared both to their classmates and similar pupils nationally. As they progress through the school, they make better progress in mathematics, until their reading and writing skills catch up. This is because of effective help given to them by teachers and support staff. This shows how effective

the school is in promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring there is no discrimination.

### **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school varies too much.
- Teachers often plan lessons with an awareness of the different groups of pupils in their classes, including gifted and talented pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and pupils supported by the pupil premium. In the best lessons, good use is made of support staff to help these pupils catch up. However, in too many lessons, activities are not sufficiently varied to meet pupils' differing needs and support is not effective enough. This is why the progress of different groups of pupils is uneven.
- The quality of marking is variable. In some classes, particularly in Year 6, pupils were given clear areas for improvement and there was evidence of pupils regularly responding to the marking and making rapid improvements as a result. However, this was not consistent across all classes and in some, the marking of work other than English and mathematics was less thorough. Because of this, pupils paid less attention to the quality of their work.
- Most lessons are planned with a swift pace and good use of information technology to keep pupils' interest. However, teachers sometimes do not leave enough time for pupils to show their understanding and make good progress.
- In the strongest lessons, pupils are able to work well both in groups and on their own and do not rely on the teachers to direct them. This was seen in a Year 5 geography lesson on Greece. However, in some lessons, especially mathematics, pupils lack the confidence to get started and are not always sure which strategies they should use to help them solve problems.
- Teachers often use questions to check pupils' understanding. However, this does not always encourage pupils to fully develop their answers.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good. In a Reception lesson on 'What makes me sad?' children spoke confidently and listened to each other with respect. Phonics skills are taught well.
- Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils and this creates a purposeful classroom atmosphere.
- Teachers explain each lesson's objectives clearly, and this means pupils are clear about what they are learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- In class, pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They enjoy their lessons and they participate enthusiastically in discussions. Pupils readily work with all their classmates, not just their best friends.
- Around the school, pupils' behaviour is also consistently good. They show consideration for each other and for visitors. Pupils of all ages spoke confidently and enthusiastically to inspectors.
- Through their positive relationships, pupils help each other to improve. They listen attentively to

each other and they respect each other's opinions. They share their ideas confidently in class, praise their classmates' achievements and support each other if they are not right.

- Pupils say they feel very safe in the school. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet.
- Pupils say bullying is very rare in the school. They have a good awareness of what bullying is and of different types of bullying. They say they trust their teachers to take bullying seriously and would feel confident talking to a member of staff if they were afraid of something.
- Pupils are punctual to school, their attendance is good and persistent absence is rare. This shows their enthusiasm for the school.
- The school has a clear approach to encouraging good behaviour and pupils say that they understand its expectations. They say instances of misbehaviour in lessons are very rare.
- Pupils think about the lives of others. They are encouraged to choose which charities the school supports and, as a result, enthusiastically raise money.
- Pupils are keen to take responsibility and they say that teachers listen to their ideas. As a result, the school council has led the way in making improvements to the school's environment. Pupils say they enjoy the wide range of clubs offered by the school.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- Senior leaders monitor the progress of different groups of pupils in the school, including the most able, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils supported by the pupil premium. However, areas of underperformance are not always identified early enough and school leaders do not always change the support to make sure it is successful.
- Sometimes, senior leaders' and subject leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching are too generous. As a result, improvements in both teaching and attainment have been inconsistent.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. They have put in place a number of initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards of attainment, but they do not always make sure that these are applied consistently by all teachers across the school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. This is why teaching in this part of the school is consistently good with children making good progress.
- The school provides plenty of activities for pupils outside of normal lessons, with the overwhelming majority of pupils participating in at least one club. Some clubs, such as the school choir, encourage pupils to work together, whilst others, such as the young engineers, help raise aspirations.
- The school has worked very well to build relationships with parents, particularly those who are not confident working with schools. Through workshops on mathematics and phonics, the school has helped parents become more able to help their children with their learning.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development. For example, pupils have learnt about the children who live in countries affected by war and, through their sponsorship of a girl in Afghanistan, they have shown their concern for the lives of others around the world.

- School leaders have well-developed plans to make full use of their primary school sports funding. Developing established sporting activities and building on existing links with Watford Football Club, Fullerians Rugby Club and Watford Cricket Club, the school will give pupils access to specialist sports coaching.
- The school has made good use of the expertise of the local authority and this has been helpful in improving the quality of teaching and learning and setting clear priorities for the future.
- Arrangements for safeguarding fully meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body provides good support for school leaders when setting and monitoring budgets. As a result, the school has been able to ensure financial stability and make improvements to its facilities.
  - Governors closely monitor what is being done to reward good teachers and tackle underperformance. However, they have been less effective in using information on the school's performance to evaluate the quality of teaching over time and hold leaders to account for the achievement and progress of different groups of pupils. In particular, they have not asked probing questions about the effectiveness of pupil premium spending.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117324
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	425376

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Colin Lee
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Cook
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 September 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01923 484340
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