

# Cotmanhay Junior School

Beauvale Drive, Ilkeston, DE7 8RR

**Inspection dates** 4–5 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Requires improvement	3
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

- Although overall standards are rising, too few pupils are reaching nationally expected levels by Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics because the most able pupils are not achieving as well as they could.
- Pupils' punctuation, grammar and spelling skills are not as strong as they should be.
- Teachers do not always make clear to pupils exactly what they need to learn in lessons, and their expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave are sometimes too low.
- The questions teachers ask in lessons do not always stretch the most-able pupils.
- Many pupils do not generally read widely or often, and are not enthusiastic about reading for pleasure.
- Leaders have not been successful in raising standards quickly enough, and do not check carefully how well all groups of pupils are learning when monitoring the quality of teaching.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school has a very accurate picture of its key strengths and weaknesses, and what it needs to do to raise standards. Recent improvements are beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and achievement.
- Good leadership of the way disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are catered for is enabling them to make good progress.
- The curriculum is exciting and there are good opportunities for sport, dance and art.
- The governors, although new, are very well informed and determined to improve the school further.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes, visiting 21 lessons and part lessons and observing all teachers. Four of these lessons were observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher and other leaders and managers, as well as representatives of the governing body and of the local authority.
- Together with the headteacher, the inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's development plan, records of governing body meetings, the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress, and procedures and records relating to safeguarding arrangements.
- Parents and carers were asked for their views at the beginning and end of the school day, and the views of the 27 who contributed to the online Parent View questionnaire were analysed.

## Inspection team

Simon Griffiths, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mike Williams

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils eligible for a free school meal, looked after by the local authority or with a parent in the armed forces) is much higher than the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above the national average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The current headteacher took up his post in September 2012.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Make teaching and learning at least good by ensuring that all teachers:
  - show that they have consistently high expectations of what pupils, and particularly the most able, can achieve and how they should approach learning
  - make clear, in each lesson, what different groups of pupils are expected to learn in order that they move up to the next level
  - ask questions skilfully to challenge pupils to think hard and deepen their understanding.
- Raise attainment in reading, grammar, punctuation and spelling by:
  - giving pupils routine opportunities for pupils to read, share and enjoy books
  - focusing all writing activities, in all subjects, on writing skills at the level the pupils need to move on to
  - ensuring displays in classrooms and around the school show the importance of reading and books.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - all leaders regularly check the progress of different groups, particularly the most able
  - lesson observations are clearly focused on the progress pupils are making.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils join the school with below-average levels of reading, writing and mathematics. Over the past three years the progress they make has improved, but it has not been good enough to enable standards to reach average levels by the time pupils leave the school.
- In 2013 the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected level in mathematics and writing was in line with the national average. This represents a considerable improvement since 2011. Standards remain below average overall because too few of the pupils capable of reaching the higher levels do so.
- Pupils' progress began to improve in 2012. Results in 2013 show that pupils made expected progress in mathematics and exceeded expected progress in writing. Progress in reading is improving across each year group, and current pupils entered Year 6 at a higher level in reading than in the previous year. However, reading standards dipped in 2013 because fewer pupils than predicted reached the expected level. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test was below average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs reach below-average levels in reading, average levels in mathematics but above-average levels in writing. School assessments show these pupils are now making good progress.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make better progress than other pupils across the school. This means the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils is closing. Nevertheless, in 2013 there was a term's difference in writing and half a term in mathematics and reading between what they and their classmates attained.
- Pupils are now making better progress in all year groups. The school's own assessments show that standards are rising. Pupils are now entering Year 6 with higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics and are better placed to achieve higher results at the end of Key Stage 2. School assessments show that more-able pupils are now making better progress.
- Pupils' work is well presented and the books show that standards are improving. Whilst there is increasing challenge for more-able pupils, they are still capable of doing more complex work.
- Pupils achieve well in physical education and sport. They take an active part in local sporting competitions and their dance skills are improving through effective use of the school's sports funding.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is not good because expectations of what pupils, and particularly the most able pupils, can achieve are not always high enough. The work planned for these pupils is often a little harder, but is not closely matched to the learning needed to take them to the next level.
- Although pupils have the opportunity to write when studying different topics, they are not encouraged to make sure they use all the skills they have recently learned in their writing lessons, such as punctuation and grammar.

- Teachers regularly check during lessons how well pupils are doing, and help them if they are having difficulty and encourage them further. They do not always go on to ask harder questions and move them on more quickly. Sometimes, teachers' enthusiastic questioning leaves too little time for pupils to produce enough work.
- In reading lessons a variety of activities are carefully prepared. However, they do not instil a love of reading and books because the tasks are not based on the books they are reading and are often focused on spelling and grammar exercises. Classrooms do not celebrate good work in language and writing to show pupils what to aim for.
- Teaching assistants often provide good support for pupils, but it is not as effective when it is not clear exactly what teachers expect to be learned by the end of the lesson.
- Teachers know their pupils well and manage behaviour effectively. In the best lessons introductions are fast paced and groups of pupils move to their places to start their work quickly while others stay for more help. In one lesson pupils learnt about coordinates, and the teacher skilfully moved the learning on quickly to negative coordinates for those who were more able.
- Teachers have good relationships with pupils, and good use of praise is helping to raise pupils' confidence in their own ability. Marking is regular and often helpful in showing pupils what they need to learn next.
- In the better lessons the teachers often prepare activities carefully. In one lesson, thoughtfully prepared large posters for pupils to complete helped them to improve and understand their multiplication skills. Learning in such sessions is good, although teachers are often filling in gaps in pupils' understanding as a result of previous underachievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well catered for. They receive effective help from classroom assistants, and sometimes excellent individual support, and activities are well matched to their abilities.

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

### **requires improvement**

- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They say that behaviour is usually good and lessons are rarely interrupted. On the few occasions when behaviour slips, this is usually the result of teachers not fully engaging pupils or not clearly conveying the levels of work and behaviour expected.
- Pupils understand about the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils say that there are few instances of bullying and where they do occur they are quickly sorted by staff, but a few parents told inspectors a small number of bullying issues were not resolved.
- New procedures for tracking and monitoring behaviour, together with better teaching, are ensuring that behaviour is improving. Pupils say the new headteacher has improved behaviour. There have been no exclusions since he arrived.
- Pupils' attendance has been low over the previous three years. Effective partnerships with support agencies, reward systems and better teaching are now helping the attendance rate to improve quickly and it is now average.
- Pupils behave well in assemblies and public areas. Assemblies are well used to encourage pupils to consider the importance of being kind to each other and become more aware of the different

forms of bullying.

- In the lessons seen, pupils behaved well. They try hard and are keen to learn. They work together well in groups but can also work by themselves. They listen carefully to the teacher and are keen to answer questions. Pupils say few lessons are interrupted.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not been successful in raising standards quickly enough. Although standards have improved since 2011, the more-able pupils have not done as well as they should have.
- Subject leaders are a new team. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable but have not yet monitored closely enough pupils' work or the progress and standards in each class, and they have not yet challenged teachers to produce better results.
- The headteacher has introduced systems to improve the quality of teaching and has created a staff team who all work together well to improve the standards pupils are achieving. Judgements on the quality of lessons are accurate but written records do not clearly show if enough has been learned by different groups of pupils. Pupils and parents say how much the school has improved in the recent past.
- Leaders have a very clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are realistic about what they have achieved and the very clear school improvement plan identifies the correct areas to improve and the precise actions needed to do so. This means the school has the capacity to improve.
- The curriculum is developing. A new reward scheme is encouraging pupils to read more at home and reading is taught on a daily basis, but there are not enough opportunities in lessons for pupils to read and share books for enjoyment. Topics are made more interesting by events such as a day focused on the Second World War. Good opportunities for art and music are made available and pupils enjoy playing instruments and also singing rounds together with the guitar. Dance lessons and a wider range of sports are now offered as a result of the sports funding.
- The leadership of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is particularly strong. Their achievements and targets are checked very carefully and as a result they make good progress. The school is now promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination well. Across the whole school the gap between the attainment of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium and those who are not is closing rapidly.
- The local authority provides a medium level of support, which has been reduced from high level in the light of the improvements now being made and the confidence it now has in the school's leadership team.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors are a new team. They are very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use data well to compare the school with other schools and help the school decide on its priorities. They are very aware that past performance has not been good enough and that current improvements need to be sustained. They are passionate about the school and are taking steps themselves to attend appropriate training. They have developed a robust procedure for managing the performance of teachers which ensures that pay rises and promotion are based on improved pupil results. They have directed resources at appropriate

priorities such as reading and the new library, but have not yet monitored how effective this has been in raising standards. They carry out their statutory responsibilities well, ensuring that safeguarding meets all current national requirements.

## 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>	112569
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	424960

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Melanie Fratwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon Robinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0115 932 2011
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