

Michael Drayton Junior School

The Woodlands, Hartshill, Nuneaton, CV10 0SZ

Inspection dates 27–28 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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.

- Too few pupils reach higher levels in reading throughout the school because, in the past, the school did not focus enough on teaching reading skills. Some pupils are still catching up lost ground.
- Pupils do not always make good enough progress because the quality of teaching is too inconsistent and not enough is good.
- Until recently, not all teachers had high enough expectations, particularly of the most able pupils, because they did not always demand enough from them.
- When teachers mark pupils' work they do not always let them know how to improve. There is too much variation in the quality of marking and, sometimes, pupils do not know what they need to do to improve.
- The quality of pupils' written work and presentation varies, and reflects too many careless mistakes.
- When senior leaders and governors check on the quality of teaching, they do not always consider carefully enough the impact of teaching on pupils' learning or whether the amount of progress pupils make in lessons is good enough.

The school has the following strengths

- This is a very caring school where strong relationships between adults and pupils contribute well to pupils' good personal development.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils feel very safe and are proud of their school.
- Attendance has risen to above average because pupils love school.
- The executive headteacher, acting headteacher, other senior leaders and governors know what needs to be done to improve the school and have played a strong role in driving through improvement in the spring term, particularly in improving pupils' progress.
- Pupils receive many good-quality learning experiences. The new wildlife area is of excellent quality and adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons, five of which were observed with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, a representative of the governing body and staff, including senior and subject leaders. There was also a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 65 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also looked at the school's own parental questionnaires and spoke informally to parents and carers.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's learning improvement plan, policies, data about pupils' progress and attainment, and how the school sets targets for the teachers to improve their work. They also looked at child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Kath Campbell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

Sarah Malam

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Michael Drayton is much larger than the average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are White British and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher at the time of the previous inspection retired in July 2013, and the school has not yet appointed a permanent headteacher. Interim leadership and management arrangements have been put in place. Since September 2013, the school has had a full-time acting headteacher who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school. An executive headteacher has also been appointed for one and a half days each week to support the school in moving forward. He is a Local Leader of Education (LLE).
- Care for pupils before and after school is not overseen by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning by making sure all teachers:
 - share and learn from the good practice that exists within the school
 - demand the best work in all subjects, particularly from the most able pupils
 - insist that written work is of a consistently good standard and well presented, with no careless basic mistakes
 - consistently provide information about how to improve when they mark pupils' work.
- Raise the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in reading throughout the school by making sure:
 - daily reading lessons are of a consistently high standard
 - all younger pupils develop the skills they need to work out unfamiliar words so that they become confident readers right from the start and can gain the more advanced skills they need to reach higher levels by the time they leave
 - all teachers keep a careful check on the books that pupils choose to make sure they are at the right level to develop their reading skills further.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that, when senior leaders and governors visit lessons or look at work in books, they focus more on what different groups of pupils have learnt in order to judge whether progress is good enough.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because, until recently, pupils did not make good enough progress, particularly in reading. Attainment in this subject declined sharply in 2013. Some of the most able pupils did not reach the levels of which they were capable because not enough was expected of them. During a period of staffing changes in the autumn term of 2013, the overall rate of progress slowed further.
- Raising attainment in reading has been a whole-school area for development. Although daily reading sessions are now an important part of school life, they vary in quality. Sometimes, activities are not demanding enough and adults do not always check whether pupils choose hard enough books. In addition, a small number of younger pupils lack the skills they need to work out unfamiliar words and this slows their progress. Nevertheless, the school has successfully raised the profile of reading and engaged families well in their children's reading development. Strong teaching in the current Year 6 has meant that pupils of all abilities now make accelerated progress, and attainment in reading in this year group is above average. Older pupils, particularly boys, enjoy reading and talk with maturity about favourite books and authors.
- In writing, there is evidence in pupils' current work that initiatives to increase the proportion of pupils making good progress are proving effective. Strategies to develop an enthusiasm for writing have been very successful, particularly among boys. There are many examples, such as the recent 'Superheroes' work in Year 6, of good-quality writing. However, there are also examples of pupils not producing a high enough standard, with too much untidy work and too many careless mistakes.
- Early signs of underachievement in all subjects are now tightly monitored. They are tackled with a sense of urgency. Much current progress is good because teachers are more focused on making sure pupils are doing well enough. However, there is still too much variation in the quality of pupils' work between classes and year groups for achievement to be good.
- Although there is some way further to go before the most able pupils consistently achieve the levels of which they are capable, the school is spending more time working with these pupils in small groups and this is not only adding to pupils' enjoyment, but it is also starting to raise their achievement because they respond well to the individual attention.
- Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is broadly average. In 2013, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 was average but lower than in 2012. Attainment in writing was slightly above average, in mathematics slightly below average and in reading below average, because not enough pupils reached higher levels. Part of the reason for the lower attainment was an influx of older pupils from another local school, several of whom had special educational needs.
- Increasing the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels has been a priority in mathematics. The school correctly identified the lack of challenge in some year groups for the most able pupils. It has put many new initiatives in place and has targeted individual pupils. Some of these initiatives are showing good results and some are too recent to show their full impact on attainment.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is currently similar to that of other pupils, and the gap between the least able pupils and the rest is starting to close. This is because the school now monitors progress more effectively and targets pupils in danger of falling behind so that they get the help they need to get quickly back on track.

- The school has used its pupil premium funding well this year to improve pupils' basic skills, particularly in reading and writing. Through effective individual support, these pupils now make as much progress as others and the gap between their attainment and that of others is closing. However, that has not always been the case. In 2013, these pupils were working over three terms behind in reading and writing and over a term behind in mathematics. This represented a widening of the gap in English and a closing of the gap in mathematics on the previous year.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, until recently, there was too much teaching that was not good enough. The quality of teaching is still variable.
- The work seen in pupils' books and in lessons highlights the inconsistencies. Some pupils produce good-quality work, others ignore teachers' suggestions for improvement and make the same mistakes over and over again. During a period of staffing changes in the autumn term, many pupils did not make enough progress. Although the rate of learning has accelerated during the spring term, some pupils are still catching up lost ground. The quality of learning is still variable, however, particularly in classes where teachers' expectations are not high enough. Capable pupils do not always produce as much work as they should.
- The quality of marking, though improving, is not good in all classes. Most work is carefully marked and older pupils know their targets for improvement. Although there are many examples of helpful marking, some does not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work.
- In lessons where teachers expect the best and activities are interesting, learning is rapid. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 where pupils were using their calculation skills to find the most powerful superhero. Pupils worked with much enjoyment and good humour because they wanted to be the first to find the answer. The task challenged every pupil and both the teacher and supporting adult skilfully guided all pupils to make good gains in their learning.
- Activities are carefully planned and teachers make sure pupils know the purpose of the lesson. Teachers and other adults work together closely as a team. Adults who help disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make sure they understand what they have to do so that they can enjoy success. The good ratio of adults to pupils makes a strong contribution to the improving quality of learning of these pupils because they get the individual help they need. Adults also make sure these pupils develop the skills they need to work without help.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have experienced a change of headteacher and deputy headteacher during the past year. Some classes have also had new teachers and yet pupils have retained the determination to succeed, even in unsettling times.
- Pupils are keen and eager to learn. They particularly appreciate the variety of activities on offer, the out-of-school clubs and the rewards they receive for doing well.
- The behaviour of nearly all pupils is good in class and around school. Occasionally, when work is not demanding enough, some pupils do not produce their best.
- There are many examples of pupils fundraising for charity, and their positive attitudes towards

learning have a strong impact on their good personal development.

- Adults manage pupils' behaviour well. Adults and pupils get along well together because they like each other. In discussion, pupils say that they are treated fairly and like the systems that are in place to promote good behaviour. They feel valued as individuals and know that adults care about them.
- Special occasions, such as whole school assemblies, show the school at its best. Pupils enjoy joining together as a community and are proud of the achievement of others. They look forward to ending the week on a positive note.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding procedures meet current government guidelines. Parents are confident that the school keeps their children safe. Pupils say that they feel very safe, including when using computers and the internet.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare, and that they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils identify adults that they can go to if they have concerns. They know they will be listened to and that what they say will be taken seriously.
- The improvement in attendance has been a major success story this year. The school keeps a careful check on the attendance of any pupil that is at risk of falling behind to make sure he or she attends regularly.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, during a period of considerable staffing change, particularly at senior leadership level, the pace of learning slowed. Although senior leaders now drive through improvement with a sense of urgency, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the pace of learning remain.
- The checks carried out by senior leaders on the quality of teaching are detailed and thorough. They are a very important part of the school's work. Teachers are far more accountable than in the past for the standards achieved. These checks provide teachers with valuable information about how to improve their teaching but do not always focus sharply enough on whether the amount of progress pupils make in lessons is good enough.
- The current interim leadership and management arrangements and the reorganisation of subject leadership have had a good impact in a short space of time. Senior leaders have made a good start on sorting out the main issues that led to the slip in standards in 2013. Long-serving staff have also provided much needed stability.
- The executive headteacher, the acting headteacher and other senior leaders are totally focused on raising attainment. A good example of their effectiveness can be seen in the way in which the school has successfully raised the profile of reading and increased pupils' enthusiasm as part of its initiatives to stem the decline in attainment in reading.
- Subject leaders, some of whom are new to their roles, are quickly developing the skills they need to know whether standards are high enough in their subjects. They have an accurate view of what needs to be done to bring about improvement. They have greater involvement in checking whether pupils make enough progress and say that they are supported well in their professional development. Senior leaders provide good role models and have started to work alongside and mentor colleagues in most need of support. However, it is too early to measure

the full impact of their work.

- Systems for checking on pupils' progress over time have been improved. Potential underachievement is identified much more quickly and the school has started to assess the progress of disabled pupils and those for whom the school receives the pupil premium far more rigorously than in the past.
- The school's learning improvement plan is of good quality and focuses well upon the actions needed to bring about improvement. It has been instrumental in raising pupils' achievement during the spring term.
- Parents regard the school highly and feel very involved in their children's education.
- The rich and diverse range of activities that the school offers makes a strong contribution towards pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Creative opportunities, through music, art and drama add greatly to pupils' enjoyment. Strong cultural links with, for example, partner schools in places such as Mumbai give pupils good insight into the lives of people from other cultures. Information and communication technology and science work also make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. There are many good examples of pupils developing their literacy and numeracy skills well in different subjects, such as in some recent work on the rainforest.
- The primary school sports funding has been used effectively to provide, for example, specialist sports coaches and 'apprentices' to provide pupils with more opportunities to develop skills and enter competitions in an increased range of sporting activities, including archery. Pupils and staff value this specialist input because it improves their expertise and it contributes well to the school's promotion of healthy lifestyles.
- The local authority adviser knows the school well and provides appropriate training when requested. She has supported the school effectively in setting up good-quality interim arrangements for the leadership and management of the school this academic year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body is experienced and knowledgeable. He is well informed and highly supportive of the school. He has a secure knowledge of what is working well and what needs to be improved. Governors keep up to date with training on important matters such as safeguarding and child protection. They keep a careful check on how money is spent, including how effectively pupil premium funding is used to close the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others. They make sure pay awards are closely linked to an improvement in pupils' progress. Governors know that the school needs to improve. For this reason, they have not been afraid to take difficult decisions when, for example, selecting key members of staff for the school. They are also in the process of developing their skills further so that they have a much greater awareness than they did in the past of whether standards are high enough.

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	125512
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	440624

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	493
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Brown
Headteacher	Diane Compton (Acting headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2011
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