

# New Chapter Primary School

Chapter, Coffee House, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EA

**Inspection dates** 17–18 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The achievement of pupils at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is too low in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress that different groups of pupils, including the most able, make across the school is not consistently good.
- The quality of teaching has not been consistently good over time to ensure gaps in the basic skills of pupils are being closed quickly enough.
- Teachers do not always ensure the pupils quickly make the necessary corrections to improve their work.
- Some subject leaders through the teams they lead have not yet been fully effective in improving the quality of teaching and the outcomes of all of the pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Reception classes make excellent progress as a result of very effective teaching and are well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They are interested in their work and their ability to focus contributes to their learning. Pupils feel safe at school and are very well looked after.
- The governing body monitors the work of the school very closely and holds the school to account for the progress pupils make very effectively.
- The headteacher has been relentless in her efforts in to improve the quality of teaching. The senior leadership team have provided effective support to staff through training and coaching. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving and the achievement of pupils is beginning to accelerate.
- The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils is very well developed. The school is inclusive and intolerance and discrimination are not accepted.

### Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 23 lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, three assemblies were observed.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector also held a meeting with members of the governing body and the chief executive of the education trust.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of pupils’ workbooks.
- A wide range of documents were examined, including the school’s information on pupils’ recent progress, as well as planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspectors also took account of the 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), informal discussions with parents dropping their children off at school and one letter from a parent to the inspection team. The views of staff were considered through the 29 staff questionnaires.

### Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Darrell Wood	Additional inspector
Diana Travis	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- New Chapter Primary School became an academy school on 1 January 2013. The school is part of the Milton Keynes Education Trust and has accessed support and services from the partner schools in the Trust.
- The school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is also above that seen nationally.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs on the school roll is over 10%. This is higher than found in most schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by additional funding is high compared with that found in most schools. This is funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school part-way through the year is higher than that typically seen in other schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2013. Most of the middle leadership team in the school have been in post for three terms, while others joined more recently at the start of this academic year.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure pupils regularly make amendments and improvements to their work following feedback from teachers and other adults
- Raise achievement of all groups of pupils including the most able, by ensuring that their basic skills in reading, writing and especially in mathematics, are developed and applied more quickly.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring the middle leadership team further develop their skills in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making to support the efforts of the headteacher to improve the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The leaders and managers within the school are determined to improve the quality of the teaching and the achievement of the pupils. The school's own records show that teaching became increasingly effective during last year, for example, in the teaching of the sounds letters make (phonics) in Key Stage 1. However, the improvements in teaching have yet to fully impact on the standards pupils achieve across all year groups.
- Teaching is improving because leaders carry out rigorous checks on its quality. They use their strong coaching and mentoring skills to offer constructive advice and training and use their effective teachers well to extend and share good practice with other colleagues.
- Middle leaders are clear about their roles in improving the quality of teaching and how their work will raise standards. Some middle leaders are still developing the skills and confidence to support their teams, particularly in relation to improving the quality of teaching.
- The effectiveness of teaching is regularly reviewed by senior leaders and is used in deciding on any salary progression and opportunities for promotion. Training has been provided by the senior leadership team and through coaching involving middle leaders, and has improved the skills of the teaching staff. Weak and ineffective teaching has been eradicated.
- The school has drawn on the facilities and expertise within the Trust to develop sports and activity clubs, financed through the primary sports funding. As a result, there has been an increase in the participation rates in sport amongst the pupils. The school now fields teams in inter-school competitions in the area. In addition, the funding has helped improve the quality teaching of physical education. The impact of this work is monitored closely.
- The school has also drawn on support from their partner secondary school for specific expertise, for example, sharing staff to teach modern foreign languages and providing staff training in science and in design and technology.
- The progress pupils are making is checked very closely by senior leaders to see if any pupils are falling behind and need additional support. The school's judgements about the quality of pupils' work have been reviewed by the local authority and within the Trust and assessments made by teachers have been validated.
- The school has moved to a more creative curriculum that provides pupils with exciting life experiences to draw on to support their learning. At the start of this term, Year 6 pupils 'got up close' to some exotic creatures that may be found in tropical areas, such as a royal python and a blue-tongued skink. The classroom activities which followed allowed the pupils to apply their skills in English and mathematics and in other subjects such as science.
- The school supports the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils very effectively. Intolerance is challenged and is not accepted. The school develops pupils' understanding of the differences between people and celebrates the diversity that exists between cultures. Key issues within the UK such as the recent Scottish independence referendum were discussed in lessons.
- The school has been successful in improving links with the local community but a small number of parents remain uncertain about the recent changes. The school provides a regular newsletter to keep parents very much up to date with what the pupils are learning – in the most recent the school highlighted the Animal Experience and that most Year 6 pupils were brave enough to hold a tarantula. The school website provides a good outline of the learning programme for each year group. The school works very closely with families to ensure the needs and welfare of the pupils are addressed.
- Child protection and safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is very experienced and holds the school to account for the progress that pupils make, including those with special educational needs and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. They know that the standards pupils achieve need to rise and about how the senior leaders have begun to improve the quality of teaching in the school. They understand there is a clear link between teachers' performance and opportunities for salary progression and promotion. The financial position of the school is reviewed closely to ensure that resources are used effectively, for example, the primary sports funding. Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed to make sure pupils are safe and well cared for in school.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This makes a positive contribution to their learning. The school has worked hard and has been successful in improving the pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils can become less interested and not as involved in their work when teaching is not as effective. The pupils have developed the skills to discuss their work and make positive contributions in lessons.
- In most lessons there is a purposeful atmosphere and pupils say they are now much more keen to learn than they were in the past.
- Around school, behaviour is good and pupils get on well with each. At lunchtimes pupils are active and say they really enjoy the sports activities and games organised by the staff supervising them.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The pupils say the systems that the headteacher has developed have reduced the number of incidents of unkindness. They say that bullying is taken very seriously by the school and dealt with quickly; pupils do not feel that bullying is an issue. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet or when playing games online.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to be involved in school life. Older pupils act as role models for younger ones, for example, partnering up with them as they come down to assemblies. In house assemblies, Year 6 pupils act as leading learners, discussing the meaning of being in a community with Year 1 and 2 pupils and recording their ideas to share later in the session.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds work well together and include each other in games. Pupils learn about the faiths and beliefs of others and appreciate the richness of each other's customs and traditions. The school as a result has few racist incidents and is a harmonious place in which to learn.
- Attendance is above the national average. The school works hard to build relationships with parents to ensure that all pupils attend regularly.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because although it is getting better quickly, it has not been good over time for pupils to make consistently good progress. Basic skills are not always effectively taught, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers mark pupils' work and provide pupils with feedback on how to improve it. However, not all teachers make sure that pupils follow up the guidance by applying it and showing their teachers that they have understood how to improve their work.
- The school's monitoring system shows the work by school leaders to ensure teaching is more effective is now having an impact, but in some lessons pupils still do not develop their skills sufficiently or rapidly enough.
- Pupils are given an outline of what they are going to learn and what the teacher expects them to achieve in the lessons. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson the teacher showed the pupils ways to complete division calculations using different methods. She provided pupils with clear explanations and allowed them to choose a method they were most confident using, which they then went on to do successfully.
- Teachers plan activities that are not too easy for some groups of pupils or too difficult for others. Pupils have the option of choosing the level at which they complete the task so they challenge themselves to achieve as much as they can.
- Both teachers and teaching assistants ask pupils questions that make pupils think. When pupils give answers they are then expected to justify their answer to provide more considered responses.

**The achievement of pupils requires improvement**

- In 2014 the unvalidated assessment information shows that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in national tests at the end of Year 6 was very low.
- The progress measures of most groups of pupils require improvement. Between 2013 and 2014, while the proportion of pupils making the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was similar to the national picture, too few pupils made progress that exceeded national expectations.
- Inspection evidence, supported by robust data provided by the school, indicates that current pupils are making better progress than those who have recently taken the national tests. Achievement has improved in response to better teaching and sharper support for pupils the school has identified as underachieving.
- In 2014 over three quarters of the pupils achieved the expected standard in the national phonics

screening check. Pupils of different ages enjoy reading. Younger pupils can use their understanding of letter sounds very effectively to build up unfamiliar words. Older pupils say that the support they have received has helped improve their reading skills. One pupil described Shakespeare as being one of their favourite authors and said that they had read *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly similar to that of other pupils. The school monitors the work of the teaching assistants both in class and in small group work. There is increased collaboration between teachers and support staff, which is improving the effectiveness of the teaching of pupils with additional needs. This is beginning to address some inconsistencies in the amount of progress some pupils make, although the full impact of this is still to be seen.
- Any issues that could lead to discrimination are challenged; there is a commitment and determination to provide all pupils with every opportunity to succeed.
- The attainment of more-able pupils is above that of other pupils in each year group but the progress they have made is not as consistent. The school recognises this and targets activities in lessons to challenge and extend the more able.
- The school has a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils. The support the school provides to accelerate their progress has greater effect as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6 the rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils are more rapid in reading and mathematics, and similar in writing. In 2014 the unvalidated data shows that supported pupils were about one term behind in reading and mathematics but a little over two terms behind in writing. No comparative national data is available at present and a comparison cannot be made with the previous years.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or those who do not speak English as their first language achieve well, with most making better progress than other pupils, especially in literacy, often because of their very positive attitudes to learning in class.

### The early years provision

**is outstanding**

- Children make excellent progress in the Reception classes and are very well prepared to move in to Year 1. They join the school with skill levels that are very much below those typically seen. Through extremely effective teaching over two thirds of them achieve a good level of development by the end of their Reception year.
- More-able children achieve highly and exceed the expected good level of development in nearly all areas of learning. The reading skills of the less able pupils and their understanding of the world around them are very effectively developed.
- Teachers and support staff skilfully plan interesting activities which allow the children to learn from tasks they choose themselves and that are linked to the teacher-led group work. The Early Years Foundation Stage team is well led. The staff work very closely together and their planning is checked and reviewed very effectively by a member of the senior leadership team.
- The school has a system of gradually building up the time children spend in the class over the first four weeks of the autumn term. During this time teaching staff work with the children and closely monitor any additional needs they may have. This allows the school to provide very effective support when it is needed and to carefully check the progress the children make.
- The behaviour of the children is extremely good. They learn classroom routines very quickly and follow the rules and the high expectations of the teachers. They are happy in class and show great interest in what they are doing. The children enjoy lessons and are challenged by learning activities. In one lesson they showed they could count to well beyond 10 and could say the letter sounds they had learned that week.
- The school works very closely with the parents to ensure the children are eased in to school life. The school offers the parents sessions that show how they can support their children's learning and provides them with a clear overview of what the children are going to learn. The progress that the children make is recorded carefully and shared with their parents in the children's learning journals.
- The children in the Reception class are kept safe and very well looked after.

## 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>	139057
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	447848

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>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	339
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Giles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Mickleburgh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	not previously inspected
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