

# Ludlow Junior School

Clee View, Ludlow, SY8 1HX

**Inspection dates** 16–17 December 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' attainment is average. Although this represents a marked improvement on the past two years, when attainment was below average, standards in reading and mathematics still lag behind those attained in writing.
- Additional government funding has not been used effectively enough to ensure that the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others is closing, especially in mathematics.
- Some lower attaining pupils are wrongly identified as having special educational needs.
- Girls are not challenged enough to achieve the highest standards in mathematics.
- The most-able pupils are not pushed enough to obtain a deeper understanding when reading more challenging books.
- Standards in spelling, grammar and punctuation remain below average.

### The school has the following strengths

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is a good rapport between pupils and staff.
- Pupils are safe in school and they say they feel safe in school.
- Pupils make good progress in writing, and their attainment in writing is now above average.
- The reorganised governing body has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Senior leaders have acted decisively to tackle underperformance in teaching and develop strong practice across the school. As a result, teaching is now good, and their pupils' attainment and progress have improved over the last four terms.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 16 lessons. Three of these observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read during lessons and scrutinised the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils, governors, a representative from the local authority, and senior leaders.
- The questionnaire responses received from 27 members of staff were analysed.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. An inspector talked to parents bringing their children to school on the morning of the first inspection day.

## Inspection team

Faheem Chishti, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Richard Johnson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Ludlow Junior is a slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- More than a third of the pupils are eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority). This represents an above-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils.
- Around a third of the pupils are identified as disabled pupils or with special educational needs. This proportion is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been some significant changes since the previous inspection, with a number of new teachers and new school leaders joining the school in recent years.

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

- Ensure that staff fully cater for pupils' specific learning needs by making sure that:
  - the identification of special educational needs is accurate
  - additional government funding provided for disadvantaged pupils is used for the purpose for which it was intended
  - the most-able pupils are pushed further with their reading by being set more challenging tasks when reading more difficult books.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and therefore raise pupils' achievement by:
  - making sure that the teaching of mathematics increases the confidence of girls and captures their interest more effectively
  - insisting that all pupils make correct use of spelling, grammar and punctuation in their writing.

An external review of 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 leadership and management are good

- With the recent new appointments of deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, the headteacher has developed a strong leadership team that works well together to motivate staff and pupils in order for them to raise standards by the of Year 6. The arrival of these two new leaders, coupled with the reorganised governing body, has enabled the headteacher to make changes which have resulted in rapid improvements, particularly in the quality of teaching across the school. Staff are unanimous in their support for the school and its leaders.
- Senior leaders are relentless in their drive to improve standards through the extensive use of support by the local authority, external consultants and a variety of teaching and leadership resources. This has led to significant improvements in many areas of the school. For example, writing standards are now above average across the school, and results at the end of Year 6 improved in reading, writing and in mathematics in 2014.
- Subject leaders have an excellent understanding of standards in their subjects. They check on the quality of teaching using a variety of methods and they support weaker teaching by role modelling effective practice and providing coaching and advice to improve practice further.
- Leaders have been successful in tackling avoidable absence and in improving pupils' attendance.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders have set up a new working group to implement the recent requirements of the new curriculum.
- School leaders provide equality of opportunity for all pupils of all backgrounds and abilities. However, there is some variation in progress for some pupils, particularly girls in mathematics, who are not always inspired to perform to the best of their ability.
- The local authority provides effective and appropriate support in order to drive improvements through all aspects of the school. The school in turn takes up further opportunities offered by the local authority for additional training and support.
- The monitoring of teaching and the performance of teachers is of a good quality and its impact is evident in the improvement in teaching over the past year. The performance management targets set for teachers are closely matched to their pupils' achievements.
- Primary school sports funding has been used to considerably expand the range of after-school clubs. It has widened sporting opportunities for pupils and has improved teachers' expertise through training and working alongside specialist sports coaches.
- The leadership of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not as strong as other areas of the school. While the performance of pupils currently identified as disabled or with special educational needs is good, some pupils are inappropriately classified as having special educational needs solely because their attainment lags behind that of their classmates.
- Some of the pupil premium funding is used to reduce pupil numbers for teaching groups in the morning sessions. This means it is being used more generally to raise attainment rather than being focused specifically on raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance has improved significantly following a recent reorganisation. Well-informed and knowledgeable governors oversee the school's work thoroughly, and they challenge leaders with vigour. They understand school data and are aware of the achievement of all pupils. They understand that the

rate of progress for all groups of pupils needs to continue to improve at a rapid pace.

- Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and set challenging targets for teachers to raise their performance. They use information from lesson observations, as well as progress and attainment data, to make a judgement of the quality of teaching in school. Financial rewards for staff are now used alongside a close scrutiny of targets set for pupils' progress and attainment. Underperformance is addressed quickly through swift actions and support where needed.
- Governors monitor the spending of pupil premium funding but are aware that this expenditure is not having the impact that it should have on the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. A governor has responsibility for the allocation of extra sports funding and keeps other governors fully informed as to its effectiveness in improving pupils' participation in sports and competitions.
- The governing body makes sure that safeguarding arrangements meet current required standards.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are keen to learn and often reflect on their own learning with their peers or through note taking. This helps them to understand what they have learnt, and what they need to learn next.
- Pupils behave sensibly, are proud of their school and are polite and well mannered at all times. Adults in the school have a caring relationship with pupils, who earn their respect and are listened to well. It is not uncommon for pupils to talk about their learning in a mature and adult manner with their teachers.
- The two learning mentors, along with pastoral workers and other adults in school, provide very effective care and support to all pupils in order that learning can take place smoothly.
- The school sets pupils clear boundaries, which they fully appreciate and understand. They particularly enjoy being invited to the 'VIP table' as a reward during lunchtimes.
- Pupils enjoy a variety of roles and responsibilities that help with the running of the school. For example, 'Digital Leaders' enjoy the status of experts in computing and organise cyber bullying assemblies and computing updates in school. In addition, during the inspection, pupils in the school had independently organised a non-uniform day to help raise funds for a local food bank.
- A scrutiny of records shows that behaviour over time is good. Teachers and other adults in the school log incidents diligently. Any incidents recorded are dealt with swiftly by leaders responsible for pupils' pastoral care.
- Leaders have been successful in improving attendance, which is now above average.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Procedures for ensuring that visitors to the school are suitable are systematic, with all visitors monitored appropriately.
- Pupils say they feel safe and are fully aware of ways to keep safe, including when using the internet. Pupils speak highly of the anti-bullying week, which reminded them of the different forms that bullying can take. They feel very confident with staff to deal with any forms of bullying, should it arise.
- Pupils respect their teachers and know that they are well cared for in school. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, stated that their children feel safe and are well looked after in school.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Senior leaders have worked to improve the quality of teaching and eradicate any weaker teaching. The impact of this is evident in improvements in pupils' achievement made since 2013.
- The standard of work in pupils' current books shows that teaching is now typically good. As a result, standards continue to improve.
- The school's method of organising children into ability groups for English and mathematics has helped to improve standards. This has had the greatest impact for the most-able pupils in school, who often enjoy specialist teaching to improve their performance.
- Teachers and other adults in school have good knowledge and skills in teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make), which enables the majority of pupils to make good progress in their reading skills, particularly in Year 3. This good start, however, is not maintained for all, especially for the most-able readers, who do not always display a depth of understanding when given challenging books to read.
- Pupils' skills in writing are improving rapidly. This is because teachers use creative and imaginative ways to inspire pupils to write often and at length. As a result, attainment in writing continues to rise quickly despite the poor spelling, grammar and punctuation displayed by some pupils. Although pupils have regular spelling tests, and the marking of pupils' work identifies weaker spelling, grammar and punctuation, these have not had a significant impact in improving achievement in this area by the end of Year 6.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving. Teachers make good use of 'working walls' to demonstrate learning and concepts. Particularly effective is the promotion of the language of mathematics for pupils. For example, in one lesson, the teacher observed and tried to catch pupils using language for reasoning and later shared this with the class to encourage more use of mathematical language. On occasion, however, girls can be somewhat passive in their mathematics because they display less interest and occasionally, are limited by overzealous boys who command greater attention.
- Teachers' use of assessment information is at an advanced stage. They use this information to identify quickly when pupils require more help, or when they need to be challenged further. Marking in pupils' books is now very clear identifying how pupils can improve their work. There is a consistent approach across the school, involving pupils responding to each lesson with a comment about their understanding.
- Teachers are very adept at using resources to capture pupils' interest. For example, 'visualisers' (which project objects and text onto a large screen) are used extensively throughout the school, not only to demonstrate pupils' work, but also as a whiteboard for teachers to demonstrate quickly and effectively.
- Well-trained teaching assistants are used extensively to provide support for disabled pupils, those who have special education needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able through on-to-one support and support in small groups.

**The achievement of pupils requires improvement**

- Achievement requires improvement because, although there have been recent improvements in pupils' progress and attainment, these have not been consistent across all subjects and all groups. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils still lags considerably behind others in school and behind pupils nationally.
- Standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 were below average. The picture improved significantly in 2014, resulting in attainment that was broadly average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. Spelling, grammar and punctuation standards, however, remained below the national average. The quality of current pupils' work indicates that standards are on track to rise further in 2015 in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared to others in school and other pupils nationally were very wide at the end of Year 6 in 2014. Disadvantaged pupils were four terms behind their classmates in reading and writing, and they were two years behind them in mathematics. When compared to pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were around two terms behind in writing, a year behind in reading, and more than four terms behind in mathematics. The gaps in mathematics, in particular, have not narrowed since 2013. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is similar to that of other pupils in school and those nationally in reading and writing. In mathematics, however, their progress remains below that of other pupils in school and below that of other pupils nationally.
- Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks, and of progress data for last year, reveals that pupils, are progressing at expected levels with their reading and mathematics, and they are making good progress with their writing. This represents an improved picture from the previous year.
- The performance of girls in mathematics over the past two years has been markedly behind that of the boys. By the end of Year 6, girls' attainment was over a year behind boys in school, and around two terms behind girls nationally.
- Although the progress and the attainment in writing represent an improving picture by the end of Year 6, this is not matched in the attainment in spelling, grammar and punctuation. This has remained below the national average for both 2013 and 2014.
- Information gathered from the school and external data show that the most-able pupils make good progress across the school and often achieve the highest standards at the end of Year 6. For example, nine of the 13 children who reached the highest level at the end of Year 2 (Level 3) went on to pass the Level 6 paper in mathematics at the end of Year 6. This is because the most-able pupils are given challenging work in small groups, often taught by skilled teachers. This picture, however, is not yet matched in their reading, where the most-able pupils do not always attain as well as they could by the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress due to the quality of one-to-one and small-group support by highly trained and qualified teachers and teaching assistants. Because of this extra help, they often make better progress than their peers in school.

## 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>	123426
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	449024

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>	246
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neville Stephens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Swann
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 December 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01584 873602
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