

Chaulden Junior School

School Row, Chaulden, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 2JU

Inspection dates 8–9 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Senior leaders, other leaders and governors ensure that pupils receive good teaching and achieve well.
- Leaders and staff have created a positive and welcoming atmosphere where pupils learn and flourish.
- Teamwork is a strength. All staff strive to improve the school and do their very best for the pupils.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well in lessons and around the academy.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Effective and robust procedures ensure that pupils are safe. As a result, pupils feel safe and very well looked after by staff.
- Teaching is checked carefully by leaders and is consistently good. Teachers use their skills well to make learning exciting and interesting. This helps pupils make good progress.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Since the academy was established, pupils in all year groups have made good progress. While Year 6 attainment was below average in 2014, these pupils had made good progress in Years 5 and 6.
- Assessment information and pupils' work show that the current Year 6 cohort are well on track to achieve higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The pupils who receive specialist support make good progress both when they are in the base and when working in their year groups.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, work is too easy for the most able and this hinders their learning.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' handwriting and in the presentation of their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Most lessons were seen jointly with the executive headteacher or the headteacher.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised and the information about their attainment and progress was analysed.
- Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, other staff, a representative from the local authority and the governors and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, as well as correspondence from parents.
- Twenty two questionnaires from staff were taken into account.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including school policies, safeguarding procedures and the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kate Robertson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Chaulden Junior is smaller than average when compared with primary schools nationally.
- About three-quarters of the pupils are White British. Other pupils are from a range of heritages. Pupils from other White backgrounds are the next largest group.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is about one in three, and this is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium additional funding is about one in three. This is above average.
- Chaulden Junior School converted to an academy under the sponsorship of Spiral Academies Trust on the 1st May 2013. When its predecessor school, also named Chaulden Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement. Spiral Academies Trust is a new multi-academy trust created by Mandeville Primary in St Albans.
- The academy has specially resourced provision for 10 pupils, across the whole age range, who have speech and language difficulties. This provision is funded by the local authority and managed by the academy. All pupils receiving this provision have a statement of special educational needs. They receive specialist teaching in 'the base' and are integrated into classes for some of their learning.
- Chaulden Junior School was previously inspected by Ofsted in March 2013 and was judged to be requiring improvement.
- The academy met the current government's floor standards in 2014, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The current headteacher became the interim headteacher in September 2013 and the substantive headteacher in April 2014.
- The academies of Chaulden Junior and Mandeville Primary have the same executive headteacher, who shares time between the two schools. There are separate governing bodies.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to outstanding so that more pupils make rapid progress and increase their attainment by the end of Year 6, by:
 - ensuring that in all classes, work is at the right level of difficulty for all, especially the most able pupils
 - taking steps to ensure that pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are consistently good.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership and management have been at the heart of the school's success. Since the opening of the academy, the headteacher, executive headteacher, other leaders and governors have developed strong teamwork amongst all staff. All show determination and passion which ensures that pupils receive good teaching and achieve well.
- Leaders place considerable emphasis on ensuring that pupils are safe. As a result, the academy is a very safe place to be and pupils feel well looked after by the staff. The academy's positive and welcoming atmosphere and the good relationships established contribute to the consistently good behaviour throughout the academy.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. As a consequence, pupils show consideration and respect for others and have a clear understanding of different cultures and faiths. They appreciate the importance of values such as democracy, respect and tolerance. Pupils at Chaulden Junior are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The headteacher, executive headteacher and key leaders have accurately identified what the academy does well and the areas in need of improvement. The findings of their review are used well to determine action to bring about improvement. For example, effective action has been taken to improve the quality and consistency of teaching.
- Good selection procedures for staff and high quality mentoring, training and support ensure that all staff with allocated responsibilities contribute well to improving the academy. The leadership of English, mathematics, special educational needs and the specialist provision are all particularly effective. Leaders are fully engaged in checking the achievement of pupils and in improving their areas of responsibility.
- Senior and subject leaders check on the quality of teaching regularly and have a clear overview of teaching across the academy. They are aware of what is needed to improve it further. Arrangements for teachers' performance management help to improve the quality of teaching, because targets for development are closely linked to pupils' progress and to the priorities in the academy improvement plan. Newly-qualified teachers receive good guidance, mentoring and support from experienced colleagues.
- The academy provides a broad and interesting range of subjects which promote pupils' good achievement and contribute well to their personal development. Pupils enjoy the additional activities provided, such as clubs, sport and educational visits. The academy is at an early stage of developing a new assessment system to reflect national changes. It is too early to evaluate the impact of the new approach.
- The primary sports grant is used effectively to extend pupils' opportunities for sport and physical development. Specialist physical education teachers have been employed to provide good teaching for pupils and to help train and develop the skills of staff. There is a productive sports partnership with a local secondary school and the academy provides a good range of sports clubs itself. Pupil participation in sport has increased and pupils are actively engaged in sports clubs and tournaments which include basketball, football, netball and tag rugby.
- Pupil premium funding is well directed to provide disadvantaged pupils with additional support, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The funding and support are having a positive impact on their progress. All pupils have full access to the learning opportunities provided and the academy effectively tackles all forms of discrimination.
- The partnership between Chaulden Junior and Mandeville Primary works well. The two academies share common policies and procedures. Staff share expertise and experience.
- The academy has maintained a productive partnership with the local authority. The local authority's Hertfordshire school improvement partner has a good working knowledge of the academy and provides good advice and support.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective. Governors possess a clear and accurate overview of the school. They analyse and understand the data on pupils' performance and are well informed about attainment and progress.
- Governors have a good understanding of quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. They understand requirements relating to the management of staff performance and ensure that promotion and pay increases are based on the progress that pupils make.
- Governors ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used properly and check the impact of spending on pupils' achievement.
- All safeguarding procedures are effective and meet requirements.
- The governors are supportive of the leaders and the academy. Their clear understanding of the academy's performance enables them to challenge the leadership and hold the academy to account.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' positive attitudes and their good behaviour contribute well to their good learning and progress.
- In all classes, including the base, pupils show enthusiasm for learning and are keen to participate in the interesting activities provided. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good in lessons, the playground and all around the academy. In some classes, including in the base, pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning and behave extremely well. The academy's meticulous records of incidents indicate that pupils' behaviour is typically good.
- Almost all parents and carers who completed the online survey stated that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved and that the academy deals effectively with bullying. The pupils themselves stated that most pupils in the school are well behaved most of the time. These positive views from parents and pupils reflect the findings of the inspection.
- Pupils are courteous and friendly, they show consideration and respect for others. Through their studies, pupils demonstrate an appreciation and a good understanding of different cultures and faiths.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance levels are currently above average.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership on safeguarding matters. She and the staff are vigilant and take effective steps to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, are well cared for and protected.
- All parents who offered a view stated that their children feel safe and are well looked after, reflecting the findings of the inspection.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of bullying, including cyber-bullying and persistent name-calling. Pupils say there is very little bullying in the academy. They reported that their teachers and staff would not allow bullying to happen.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, they demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- All staff have had recent training in safeguarding pupils. The systems for checking and recording safety matters ensure that any concerns are swiftly dealt with. Staff are appropriately checked prior to their appointment.

- Leaders and staff are vigilant in carrying out regular risk assessments and make sure that the academy is a safe place for pupils to be.

The quality of teaching is good

- The academy's relentless focus on improving teaching has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Teaching enables pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers establish strong relationships with the pupils in their class and manage them well. They expect pupils to do their very best and the pupils' respond well to these high expectations.
- Teachers are particularly successful at developing pupils' speaking skills and in extending their vocabulary. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their learning and express their opinions clearly. Pupils respond well to teachers' expectations and they use newly-acquired vocabulary effectively.
- The teaching of reading has been strengthened. Teachers are good role models when reading to pupils and pupils have good opportunities to examine and review a range of texts. The academy promotes enjoyment in reading effectively.
- Writing is taught well. Teachers often use drama and role play with pupils to make tasks exciting and interesting and to help them generate ideas for writing. They demonstrate writing skills and techniques to pupils and provide opportunities for pupils' to practise these in their own writing.
- In mathematics, teachers use explanations and demonstration effectively to develop pupils' understanding of calculation and mathematical operations. Pupils gain essential knowledge, understanding and skills and are provided with interesting opportunities to use these to solve mathematical problems.
- In most cases, teachers' effective planning helps to ensure that learning activities are suitably challenging for different groups of pupils. As a result, pupils are engaged, inspired and make good gains in acquiring knowledge and deepening their understanding.
- Pupils with speech and language difficulties receive good specialist teaching in the base and when integrated into classes. The teaching of other disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is also good. Learning activities provided are well suited to pupils' specific needs and enable pupils to learn well.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed. They work closely with the class teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in developing pupils' language and social skills.
- Pupils know how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve because of teachers' clear and helpful feedback. The marking of pupils' work is effective. Teachers provide praise for good work and helpful comments to guide them to the next steps of their learning. Pupils report that they find teachers' marking very helpful.
- Occasionally, the work is not set at the right level of difficulty for the most able pupils. When this happens, pupils' learning slows down because the work is too easy, or when they are ready to be moved on to more demanding work.
- At times, teachers do not ensure that pupils' work is neatly presented.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most year groups enter Year 3 with below-average attainment. Since the opening of the academy, most

pupils in all year groups have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2014 was below average, particularly in reading and mathematics. While these pupils made good progress in Years 5 and 6, they had made limited progress in Year 3 and 4 because of past weaknesses in teaching. Pupils' work, assessments and learning in lessons indicate that standards in the current Year 6 are higher than those achieved last year.
- In Year 6 in 2014, disadvantaged pupils attained lower standards than others in the academy. These pupils were about 10 months behind the others in reading, nine months in mathematics and eight months in writing. When compared to other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils at Chaulden Junior were about five terms behind in reading and mathematics and four terms in writing.
- More recent assessment data for the current year groups show that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and gaps are closing rapidly. In the current Year 4 and Year 5, the disadvantaged pupils are achieving at least as well as their peers.
- In summer 2014, the proportions of pupils who attained the higher levels by the end of Year 6 were average in writing but below average in reading and mathematics. Improvements to teaching mean that the most able are more effectively challenged and the proportions attaining higher levels are increasing. However, occasionally in lessons, work set is not demanding enough to stretch the most able.
- Pupils with speech and language difficulties make good progress in language, reading, writing and mathematics due to lively and effective teaching. For the same reason, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills. This is because teachers provide well-structured opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning and express their ideas and opinions.
- Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress in this area. They have acquired essential reading skills. They apply reading skills well to examine challenging texts and to find useful information. For example, pupils in Year 3 made good progress in examining a piece of text from Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. They acquired new vocabulary such as *aura*, *formidable* and *tyrannical*. Pupils were animated and expressed emotions well as they acted out a scene between *Matilda* and the headteacher.

In writing, pupils are achieving well. They apply their writing skills well to different subjects and topics. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote informative news reports about the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. They write for different audiences and purposes, using grammar and punctuation effectively. Pupils in Year 6 showed a good understanding of the features of biographies, using research skills to write imaginatively about the life of Nelson Mandela.

- In mathematics, pupils are making good progress. They show a secure knowledge and understanding of calculation and mathematical operations. They use and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to solve mathematical problems. For example, pupils in Year 4 made good progress in estimating and measuring length. Those in Year 5 made good progress in solving problems involving decimals, fractions and percentages.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation are not consistently good throughout the school. Whilst most pupils take care and pride in their handwriting and presentation, with some, handwriting is under-developed and presentation is untidy.

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	139550
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	449869

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kris Baldwin
Headteacher	Cherry Newby, Amanda Godfrey (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01442 395758
Fax number	N/A
Email address	admin@chauldenjm.herts.sch.uk

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