

The Lincoln Manor Leas Junior Academy

Hykeham Road, Lincoln LN6 8BE

Inspection dates	28–29 June 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- There is a genuine sense of teamwork at The Lincoln Manor Leas Junior Academy. Staff feel valued, parents say that they feel involved and pupils agree that 'we can all work together'.
- Governance is a real strength of the school. Governors provide a successful balance of support and challenge for school leaders.
- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve it further.
- Leaders support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. They make sure that pupils receive the help they need to enable them to achieve well from their starting points.
- Leaders effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a variety of thoughtfully planned learning opportunities.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers and teaching assistants use questions effectively to make sure that subject content is fully understood by pupils.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge effectively to teach new ideas to pupils and to make strong links from one lesson to another. As a result, learning makes sense to pupils and they make good progress over time.
- Pupils behave well around school and during their playtimes. They enjoy the resources and play equipment available to them. They treat their school, their friends and adults with respect.
- Carefully planned activities with local secondary schools make sure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- On occasions, teachers do not make sure that tasks are sufficiently challenging for all pupils or intervene quickly enough when pupils are ready to learn something more difficult.
- Pupils are not achieving as well in mathematics, spelling, punctuation and grammar as they are in reading and writing.
- Subject leaders are not keeping a close enough check on the progress pupils are making in all subjects across the curriculum.
- Teachers are not consistently insisting on a high standard of presentation in pupils' work. In some cases untidy work is accepted.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate of progress that pupils make by ensuring that:
 - teachers intervene quickly when pupils are able to tackle more difficult work so that all groups of pupils, including those who are most-able, make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in mathematics
 - teachers check that pupils are consistently and accurately applying their skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation when they are writing across a range of subjects
 - teachers insist that pupils present their work well
 - subject leaders track the progress pupils are making in their areas of responsibility more effectively.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders, including governors, know the school very well. They monitor closely and frequently the quality of teaching and learning and the progress pupils are making. As a result, leaders plan for developments based on a clear view of what needs to be done to bring about improvements.
- Leaders track the progress that pupils are making rigorously. They meet with teachers frequently to consider which pupils will benefit from additional support. Pupils who are currently in school have made good progress from their starting points as a result.
- Leaders and governors make sure that all school staff are involved in school developments. Annually, they hold a meeting with all staff to consider the achievements of the previous year and the developments that are to be pursued during the forthcoming year. As a result, staff feel valued and they have an understanding of how their different roles contribute to improvements.
- The leader with responsibility for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has robust systems to make sure that the needs of these pupils can be met. She keeps a close eye on the progress that individual pupils make. The leader effectively engages with external agencies, if this is appropriate, and makes sure that pupils have the support they need. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress over time.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils. They check the progress these pupils are making and provide additional support for those pupils who will benefit from it. Most recently, leaders have introduced an additional breakfast club for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that they get a good start to their school day.
- Additional government funding for primary sport is used well. Sports coaches provide professional development for teachers and sports clubs for pupils at lunchtime. The coaches train pupils to be sports leaders who encourage their peers to take part in sports at lunchtime. The annual sports presentation assembly celebrates not only pupils' achievement in sport, but a special award is given for good sportsmanship.
- Systems for teachers' performance management are thorough. Staff receive valuable information about how they can improve their practice, which is supported by professional development if it is required.
- The curriculum is broad. Pupils have the opportunity to learn in a variety of ways. They enjoy topics such as 'Café Italiano', when they visited a restaurant and learned how to run a café. Pupils cooked and developed their social skills by serving and welcoming their parents as guests. Other pupils took part in 'The Great Bread Bake Off', investigating bread from around the world. In the week of the inspection, pupils were looking forward to a visit to Lincoln Castle to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of the Somme. Pupils had made poppies while they learned about the battle, and were due to enter the castle, symbolically, at 7.30am – the time the troops went over the top.
- Leaders promote the understanding of British values well. They link British values to the school's own values, such as perseverance, responsibility, trust and friendship. Pupils democratically vote for representatives of the school council and they understand how the rule of law links to having school rules which are there to keep them safe.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. Pupils learn to play a variety of musical instruments, such as the samba drums and ukulele. They take part in regular drama productions. Large photographs around the school and near the outdoor stage celebrate previous performances. Pupils develop an understanding of faiths and cultures represented in Britain and throughout the world. They speak clearly about how their lessons and assemblies help them to understand about respect, prejudice and discrimination.
- Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and those who spoke with inspectors during the inspection would recommend the school to other parents. Those parents whose children had recently joined the school praised the way the school has helped their child to settle in. Parents typically made positive comments about the approachable and friendly staff. One parent commented, 'There's always something going on and we always feel included.'

- Subject leaders provide a report for school leaders and governors about the strengths and areas for improvement in their subject annually. Leaders are paired with a governor who visits the school to find out for themselves about developments in the subject. Leaders undertake monitoring by scrutinising pupils' books, for example, but they do not track the progress pupils are making in their area of responsibility. As a result, they are not fully aware of the progress pupils are making in their areas of responsibility.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have a clear view of the strengths and areas that need to be improved because they ask challenging questions of leaders and they are frequent visitors to school to see it in action for themselves. The chair of the governing body provides good support for the headteacher and school leaders.
 - Governors are strategic in their approach to their work. They are committed to the school and ambitious for the pupils to do well.
 - Staff appreciate the time governors put in to getting to know them and their views, for example at the annual 'vision' meeting which sets out the developments for the forthcoming year. As a result, staff feel invested in and valued for the work they do.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders make sure that all the necessary vetting checks are undertaken when a new member of staff is appointed. All staff have had the appropriate training, so they are able to raise concerns about a child, if they have any. The headteacher keeps records appropriately well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to explain new ideas to pupils clearly. They make sure that pupils have more than one strategy to support their learning. For example, using actions and looking closely at the shape of a word to help pupils remember the spelling of certain words.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make effective use of questions to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. They ensure that pupils understand the concepts being taught.
- Teachers use correct vocabulary, and successfully encourage pupils to do the same.
- Teachers gently encourage pupils to be resilient in their learning. In one lesson a pupil, unable to think of an answer, was skilfully supported by the teacher and his classmates to work his answer out. He did not give up and the appropriate encouragement enabled him to answer correctly.
- Pupils are able to explain what they are learning and how it links to previous learning because teachers make this explicit to them. This means that learning makes sense to pupils and they are able to draw on skills and knowledge from other lessons to improve their understanding. For example, in an English lesson, pupils were skilfully inferring feelings and information from a picture as they drew on the knowledge they had gained during their history lessons about the second world war. In the same lesson, the teacher made sure pupils understood and could use a broad range of vocabulary including 'distracted', 'prejudice' and 'optimistic'.
- Reading is effectively promoted. A whole-school initiative to encourage pupils to read more regularly and to improve pupils' understanding of what they are reading has been successful. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading, especially the wider range of books that the school now provides. One child described the reading books on offer as 'really exciting', while another child explained, 'I enjoy reading a lot more now.' As a result, pupils' achievement in reading has risen markedly.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They encourage pupils to be independent while providing an appropriate balance of support and challenge so that these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers plan mathematics lessons that will engage pupils' interests and that build systematically on previous learning. Learning is most effective when teachers provide an appropriate range of resources for pupils to use. Teachers and teaching assistants do not always step in quickly to provide further challenge or teach a more difficult idea to the most able pupils when they are ready for it. As a result, progress for these pupils stalls.
- Pupils are frequently asked to provide feedback to their peers about the work that they have completed during the lesson. This works most effectively when pupils offer sharply focused feedback.

- Teachers do not check that the strategies pupils have learned, for example in grammar, punctuation and spelling, are being consistently applied when pupils are writing across a range of subjects. This means that these aspects of pupils' writing are not being constantly improved upon.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They work hard and apply themselves well to the learning activities provided by the teacher.
- Pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through a balanced diet and exercise. They demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when they are using the internet. Displays around the school remind pupils about online safety.
- The school council consists of pupils from each year group who have been elected into post by their classmates. They make a positive contribution to the life of the school. During the inspection, inspectors attended a school council meeting. The headteacher had asked the school council members to consider ways to improve the school's website. Pupils organised themselves and discussed sensible suggestions to put forward to the headteacher.
- Pupils say that they enjoy school. As a result, attendance is consistently at least in line with national averages for all pupils. Although the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is slightly below the national average, it is improving over time.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have many different opportunities to learn and develop their skills outside the classroom. Pupils enjoy the trips and residential visits to enhance their learning. Recently pupils have undertaken an enterprise project to turn £5 into a profit. As part of this, they have had the chance to share their efforts with their parents and sell their wares to make a profit for charity.
- Leaders provide pupils with the opportunity to engage with a wide range of activities to develop their social and language skills. The pupils' Young Journalist Academy produces video newscasts, while other pupils compile 'The Phoenix' monthly magazine for other pupils, encouraging them to take an interest in the news and current affairs.
- Pupils take part in performances and productions for their families to enjoy. Pupils enjoy attending a range of after-school clubs such as drama, sewing and a variety of sports.
- Pupils are often asked to discuss their learning, work collaboratively or to offer feedback to their peers about the work they have completed. Pupils willingly work with any of their classmates because teachers have established cooperative working as a normal part of the school routine.
- Pupils are prepared well to start the next stage of their education. Teachers from local secondary schools regularly visit The Lincoln Manor Leas Junior Academy to work with the pupils. An informative display in Year 6 includes examples of a secondary school uniform and prospectuses. Teachers afford additional support to those pupils who would benefit from it.
- Pupils' books show that not all pupils take pride in their work. While many pupils' books are neatly presented, this is not consistently the case. Some books showed work that had been scribbled out, for example, showing that teachers were not insisting upon pupils always presenting their work to the best of their ability.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is an orderly place in which to learn. Pupils move around school calmly and sensibly, demonstrating good manners and holding doors open for each other and adults alike.
- Pupils told inspectors that they are proud to attend The Lincoln Manor Leas Junior Academy. Their comments included, 'Teachers make us feel secure'; 'I like the effort we put into shows and performances'; and 'Everyone here is a team. If you come to this school, you are part of the team. We can all work together.'
- During the inspection, most parents who spoke with inspectors said they feel the school responds to concerns well. However, a very small number of parents expressed concern about how well the school deals with issues surrounding accusations of bullying. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare, but if they have any concerns, they can speak with a trusted adult who, they are confident, will help them. Inspectors agree with the views of the majority of parents and pupils.

- A very few pupils need reminders to stay on task during lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants manage this sensitively and gently. They enable pupils who find it difficult to modify their own behaviour to participate in their learning.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' books and observations of learning in lessons show that pupils currently in the school are making good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders track closely the progress all pupils make. They have implemented a rigorous system for assessing and tracking pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Leaders have worked alongside partner schools and external advisers to ensure that their assessments are accurate.
- Published information for 2015 shows that the school met the government's floor standards. This was an improvement on the previous year. The floor standards set the minimum requirements for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in mathematics was broadly in line with the national average and above the national average in writing. For both these subjects, this was an improvement on the previous year.
- School information shows that in English and mathematics, current pupils are making good progress this year and the majority of pupils are achieving the expected standards for their age in all year groups.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading fell just below the national average, but was in line with the national average for the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level of attainment. Leaders immediately put in place initiatives to improve pupils' achievements in reading. School information shows that this has had a strong and rapid impact. Pupils in all year groups are making good progress in reading and the proportion of pupils currently on track to meet the expected standard for their age this year is higher as result.
- School and published information show that the progress disadvantaged pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with, and sometimes exceeds, the progress made by other pupils in school.
- Observations in lessons show that pupils make progress because teachers plan lessons that are well matched to pupils' ability. However, teachers do not always make sure that the most able pupils are being moved on to more difficult work as quickly as they could be, for example, in mathematics. When this happens, progress for these pupils is hampered. As a result, some of the most able pupils are not consistently achieving the high standards of which they are capable.
- While pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar during English lessons, teachers do not check well enough that pupils consistently apply these skills when they are writing across a range of subjects. As a result, pupils do not fare as well in this aspect of the English curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	139470
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10005663

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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Farley
Headteacher	James Greenwood
Telephone number	01522 881370
Website	www.manor-leas-junior.lincs.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@manor-leas-junior.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized junior school.
- Lincoln Manor Leas Junior School converted to become a standalone academy in April 2013.
- Most pupils are of white British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly higher than average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, or parts of lessons, some of which were observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors, together with members of the leadership team, looked at a range of pupils' books and scrutinised information relating to the progress and attainment of pupils currently in school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the leadership team, including those with responsibility for assessment, English, mathematics and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors also met with the subject leaders for science, history and music, and four other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and two groups of pupils. They spoke to parents as they brought their children to school in the morning.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by school leaders including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plan, minutes of governors' meetings, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors attended a meeting of the school council and an assembly. They also observed pupils during playtime, indoor lunchtime and as they moved around school.

Inspection team

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