

Imperial Avenue Infant School

Imperial Avenue, Braunstone, Leicester, Leicestershire LE3 1AH

Inspection dates

12–13 September 2017

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders have provided a clear focus for the rapid improvement of this school over the previous twelve months. Plans for school development are accurate and focused. Leaders understand that improvement is still recent and needs more time to be fully effective.
- The headteacher is new but has provided effective support for the school over the course of the last academic year.
- The governors have provided determined support and have been increasingly effective in holding leaders to account.
- The school is improving in all areas. Assessments carried out at the end of last term show that Year 2 pupils made above average progress from a low starting point.
- The development of reading has been a priority. Across the school, pupils gain secure skills in phonics. The proportion who met the expected standard in the 2017 phonics test is now broadly average.
- Staff have received effective additional training and support during the last 12 months. This has had a positive effect on their skills and confidence. Assessment of pupils' learning is improving across a range of subjects.
- While most pupils are making good progress from their starting points, their overall attainment at the end of Year 2 is still below average. This is especially the case for some disadvantaged pupils and some boys.
- The good leadership within the early years is enabling most children to make good progress. The provision helps children to quickly and happily settle into the good routines provided. Some boys are still behind at the end of the Reception Year.
- Teaching is improving across the school. Teachers and other staff have a clear understanding of how to plan and teach lessons effectively. Additional support is helping many pupils to make good progress.
- The very large majority of pupils behave well in lessons. A few, mainly boys, find it harder to maintain their concentration during some longer sessions.
- Pupils spoken with say they feel safe and have no concerns about bullying. This view is confirmed by those parents and staff who completed a questionnaire.
- School leaders have put in place strong actions to improve attendance. The proportion of pupils who are absent has fallen to average. Those pupils who have had especially low attendance are now in school more regularly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- School leaders should continue to improve, review and develop current school improvement plans in order to ensure that :
 - older pupils attain outcomes in line with the national averages at the end of Year 2
 - the boys who have fallen behind their peers catch up, especially in the early years
 - the disadvantaged pupils who have fallen behind continue to make more rapid progress and catch up with their peers.
- Develop teaching further so that systems for teaching and assessing pupils' achievement in subjects other than English, mathematics and science continue to improve.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The leadership of the school has been transformed over the last 12 months. A new headteacher took up post in April 2017, following a period when she provided effective support for the school. This continuity has helped the school to continue a period of rapid improvement. In the previous 12 months, two newly appointed deputy headteachers have provided skilful support.
- New leaders have ensured that all staff have received well-focused additional training and support. This has been instrumental in securing rapid improvement and has helped to develop a strong culture among staff of striving for continuous further development. Many staff say they feel empowered and motivated by the support they have received.
- School leaders, led ably by the headteacher, have an accurate understanding of the school's priorities. They are realistic about areas that are weaker and understand fully that the school still has areas to improve. Leaders have high aspirations for the pupils.
- Plans for improvement are accurate and identify important 'milestones' that need to be achieved. Leaders have already demonstrated their effectiveness in ensuring that pupils make better progress. Across all year groups, the large majority of pupils are now making good progress from their starting points.
- The use of the funding for disadvantaged pupils has ensured that they make similar progress to their peers and many are now starting to catch up, where they had previously fallen behind. Leaders understand the need to maintain this priority. The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding has been used well to provide additional activities for pupils, as well as training and support for staff.
- Teaching in a range of subjects has improved. For example, pupils are now doing much better in science. Further work to consolidate this has started. The assessment of subjects, such as computing, music, art, history and geography, is improving and is identified as a priority.
- Pupils learn about British values, such as tolerance and respect, in a way that is appropriate for their age. They have opportunities to learn about different cultures and faiths during topics, and in the well-organised assemblies. Learning is enhanced by a good range of trips and activities.
- The school provides good systems to help parents and pupils understand the importance of attendance. Actions taken to challenge absence have been effective.
- Leaders use assessments of pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics well to check on the progress made by pupils, identify gaps in their learning and to hold staff to account.
- The leadership of subjects and other aspects of the school's work are increasingly effective. Staff with responsibility for these areas are starting to develop their skills and capabilities well. Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively to provide additional support and to ensure their good progress.
- The local authority has brokered effective support for the school. This includes the

development of a strong partnership with other schools and the deployment of a national leader of education, who acted as an executive headteacher. The local authority officer assigned to the school has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has provided determined leadership. The chair and vice-chair of the governing body, in particular, have provided helpful but effective challenge for school leaders since the previous inspection. Governors understand well their responsibilities and governing body meetings are increasingly focused. Governors have checked that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, the sport premium and funding support for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are spent appropriately. Governors participate in regular training activities and are realistic about the recent improvements that have been made in the school, as well as the need to maintain them. Governors have checked that safeguarding arrangements are appropriate and understand the need to maintain their understanding of how to prevent radicalisation within school. The governing body has ensured that the performance of staff is taken into account when agreeing pay progression.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that staff receive regular training in how keep pupils safe and are confident about how to identify and report any concerns they may have.
- Detailed checks are used to ensure that adults working at the school are appropriately trained, suitable and experienced.
- Thorough records of any concerns about pupils' behaviour are in place.
- Pupils spoken with say they feel safe at school. They have no concerns about bullying and feel confident that an adult would help them if they had any worries. Parents and staff who spoke with inspectors, or completed a survey for the inspection, confirmed this view.
- School leaders have successfully created a culture that promotes the importance of safeguarding. Effective links with parents and other stakeholders make a good contribution to this culture.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Across the school, teaching is increasingly effective. Staff have responded positively to the intensive support and training they have received in the last 12 months. For many, this has had a strong effect on their skills and confidence. Many staff feel they have learned a great deal during this time and several said they feel invigorated by this experience.
- Teachers have consistently good subject knowledge. They have become increasingly skilled in teaching reading, especially the use of phonics. The teaching of science has also become much more focused and effective.

- The work of teaching assistants is planned consistently well. They provide additional support for specific groups of pupils, or individuals. As a result, many who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers use a range of methods to check learning. This includes skilful questioning and use of techniques, such as individual whiteboards, to understand how well each pupil is doing. This information is used to adjust planning, provide additional help, or provide targeted support where required.
- Assessments of work are 'moderated' through joint discussions with staff from local schools. The assessment of foundation subjects is improving and leaders have already identified the work required to develop this aspect of the school further.
- The school's expectations for pupils' behaviour are applied consistently across the school. Pupils often listen well and are happy to discuss ideas and work hard. A few pupils, mainly boys, sometimes find it difficult to maintain their concentration and enthusiasm for learning, especially during longer sessions.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and thoroughly. The school's policy for this type of feedback is used very consistently. Many pupils respond by improving their work and their books show that they take account of these areas in future work.
- The teaching of writing is improving consistently across the school. Staff are clear about how to develop pupils' handwriting skills, the importance of writing in different styles and the need for pupils to develop fluency in their writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Staff are confident about what they need to teach and use a good range of strategies to help pupils learn.
- The most able pupils receive additional support and challenge in order to stretch them and make good progress.
- Teachers promote a culture of respect and tolerance during lessons. All staff provide good role models.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils learn about a wide range of topics. They are keen to discuss ideas and will often listen to each other with respect. They understand the need for tolerance.
- Pupils say they feel happy and safe in school. Different groups of pupils get on well together.
- Many understand the importance of learning and they are increasingly proud of their work and happy to improve it further.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils almost always behave well in lessons. They understand the school's expectations

and take it in turns to speak and listen. If asked a question, they will often respond with enthusiasm.

- A few pupils, especially some boys, find it harder to maintain their concentration. Although they will respond to requests to focus on their work, they sometimes find this difficult. A small number can lose attention, or not try as hard as they might.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly, especially if an adult is supervising them. For example, they will line up for assembly, or for their lunch, in a sensible way. A few boys are less able to manage their own behaviour if moving around without adult supervision. Pupils are lively and exuberant at lunchtime, playing with equipment enthusiastically but sensibly. They respond well to adult supervision.
- The attendance of pupils has improved over the last year and is now in line with all schools. The attendance of groups of pupils who have had lower attendance than average has also improved.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The progress made by pupils has improved significantly over the last 12 months.
- In the 2017 tests at the end of Year 2, many pupils made above average progress from their starting points. Although their attainment remains below average, it has improved significantly.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level in the 2017 Year 1 national phonics screening check was in line with the national average. Across the school, pupils use these skills they have learned confidently. Those who are behind their peers are catching up. Almost all pupils achieve the expected standard in phonics by the time they reach the end of Year 2.
- The teaching of reading is increasingly effective. Pupils read regularly and careful checks are made on their progress. The additional support provided for those who have fallen behind is enabling them to catch up.
- Pupils are developing their skills in writing well. The large majority leave Year 2 confident in how to write neatly and accurately. Many are also able to write in a range of different styles, such as writing instructions or descriptions, and understand the ways they need to adjust their style to make the text appropriate.
- Pupils are developing confident skills in mathematics. They are able to understand and use tables and different calculations, applying them confidently in a range of different contexts.
- The most able pupils are making good progress. They benefit from extra support or challenge in their work. The proportion who achieved work at a greater depth in the 2017 tests at the end of Year 2 was similar to the national average.
- The pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their starting points. They benefit from the well-planned additional support provided.
- Disadvantaged pupils are increasingly making good progress across different year group and classes. Some have previously fallen behind their peers and further work is needed to ensure that they catch up and attain as well as their peers. Leaders have

identified this priority in their planning.

- Some boys have also fallen behind over time. Although many are now making good progress, a few sometimes find it difficult to maintain their concentration and are less engaged in learning. Although teachers manage their behaviour effectively, leaders are aware that further strategies are needed to ensure that those who have previously fallen behind start to catch up quicker.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support. As they move through the school they catch up with their peers and make good progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in the Nursery and Reception Years with skills that are often below average.
- They quickly settle in to the well-organised routines. During the inspection, Nursery children had only been in the early years for a few weeks. They have a good understanding of the clear and simple rules they are expected to follow. They are able to listen to adults, work together and take turns. Parents who spoke with inspectors said they felt happy with how their child had settled into the school.
- Staff carry out accurate assessments of each child's skills and experience. This information is used to provide well-focused activities.
- Over time, children have made good progress from their starting points. The proportion who achieved a good level of development in 2017 was broadly average and has increased significantly over time.
- Leaders have identified that some disadvantaged children, in particular, have started the early years with more limited skills and experience. Although they have made similar progress to their peers, they have not always caught up. This has been a priority and, in 2017, this group made better progress.
- Boys have also lagged behind girls in the early years. Leaders have started to take actions to improve the progress they make. This remains a priority.
- The strong, welcoming and calm culture of the early years provision enables children to feel safe and secure.
- Parents are becoming increasingly involved in their child's learning. During the inspection, a large number joined their child for a morning session, learning about the routines, activities and learning that take place. Leaders understand the need to involve parents even more in the assessment of their child's learning.
- The early years provision is led well. The deputy headteacher with responsibility for this area has a good understanding of the strengths and areas that require further improvement. Accurate priorities and a comprehensive improvement plan are already in place for this year.

School details

Unique reference number	120014
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10031140

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	306
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Harrop
Headteacher	Elizabeth Smith
Telephone number	01162 824503
Website	www.imperialavenue.leicester.sch.uk
Email address	head@imperialavenue.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is a larger than the average-sized primary school providing education for infants.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion who have an education, health and care plan is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, for whom the school receives the pupil premium, is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is above the national average. The majority are from White British backgrounds. Almost half are from a range of other ethnic groups. The largest group, about one sixth, are from other White backgrounds, mainly eastern European.

About one third of the pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils arriving at and leaving the school part-way through their education is low compared to other schools.
- The school's early years provision in the Nursery class is part time and full time in the Reception class.
- The school has received support during the last academic year from a national leader of education from Parks Primary School. Between September 2016 and April 2017 she was the executive headteacher, supported by a head of school.
- In April 2017, the head of school was appointed as the headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 22 sessions and observed pupils working in some smaller groups. They observed four sessions jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors heard some pupils read and checked reading records.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the teaching staff who have responsibility for subjects or other aspects of the school.
- Inspectors met the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with pupils in small groups, in lessons and at lunchtimes.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 12 parents from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors held conversations with parents at the start and end of the school day and met a parent who requested a meeting. The inspectors also analysed the 16 responses to a questionnaire for staff and 30 responses made by pupils.
- The inspectors reviewed a number of documents. These included: data on pupils' recent and current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; reports on the quality of teaching over time; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the school's improvement plan; documents relating to safeguarding and the minutes of various meetings, including those of the governing body.

Inspection team

David Bray, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Garnham	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Beeston	Ofsted Inspector

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