

Calcot Junior School

Curtis Road, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 4XG

Inspection dates

5–6 December 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Following the previous inspection, standards at the school began to decline. Since the current headteacher's appointment, she has led the school with relentless determination. Her ambition for every child to do well means that standards are now rising rapidly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- During the summer term, senior leaders and governors developed a wider leadership team, by appointing new middle leaders who are enthusiastic to contribute to whole-school improvement. Currently, they provide high-quality support to their colleagues, including new teachers to the school.
- Teachers have effective subject knowledge. They know their pupils very well, which means that teaching is typically well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils' good progress is particularly noticeable in mathematics, where outcomes were previously weaker. The teaching of reading is improving, although some weaknesses remain.
- Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly school and are positive about learning. The school nurtures pupils well. Pupils say they feel safe in school and have trusting relationships with the adults who work with them.
- Pupils enjoy memorable experiences that make the different subjects come alive. They particularly relish the many opportunities to participate in music, art, physical education (PE) and sport, all of which are school strengths.
- Parents say the school is well led and managed and their children make good progress. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities told inspectors that their children are well supported.
- Leaders are uncompromising in their aim for disadvantaged pupils to achieve success at the school. In all year groups, disadvantaged pupils are catching up impressively on their earlier gaps in learning.
- Leaders are aware that teaching does not consistently enable pupils with low starting points, whether disadvantaged or otherwise, to do as well as they should.
- Although new leaders are supporting improvements to teaching and learning, their work in some subject areas is very recent. Middle leaders have not had the time to make a full impact on the quality of teaching, and so ensure that pupils sustain current rapid rates of progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the roles of new middle leaders so they have increasing involvement in school improvement priorities and sustained impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Embed current strategies to improve the teaching and learning of reading, in order to raise attainment.
- Ensure that teaching consistently meets the needs of all pupils, especially for those who have low starting points in their attainment when they start at the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since coming to the school, the inspirational headteacher has worked with urgency to improve teaching and develop a broad and interesting curriculum. She has been ably supported by a skilful deputy headteacher to implement many successful strategies across a short timescale.
- Senior leaders know the school well and sharply monitor the difference their work makes. They use their findings to develop actions to improve provision for pupils. Leaders give helpful feedback to teachers with effective support and training that further develops skills.
- Following a number of staff changes in recent years, senior leaders and governors appointed middle leaders across the federated infant and junior schools. These talented leaders are already having a notable impact on improving teaching and learning, by modelling and sharing their practice. Teachers know where to go for support and are keen to receive it.
- Persistent work has taken place to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and to meet the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders are aware that, in recent years, some strategies have proved unsuccessful. Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is currently used well to identify and tackle any barriers to learning, through extra teaching, curriculum enrichment or pastoral support.
- The school made a slow start introducing the primary curriculum changes that were required a few years ago. Almost all subjects have recently been revised, with new planning and professional training for staff. The school is continuing to embed some of these developments. The curriculum now offers broad and interesting coverage within each subject area, and a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. There is a focus on ensuring pupils' participation in cultural and sporting opportunities that are of the highest calibre. Pupils and parents value these occasions and everyone who visits the school enjoys hearing the uplifting voices of the school's choir.
- Almost all parents who communicated with inspectors are highly supportive of the school and appreciate senior leaders' commitment. Parents recognise the school's improvement. A typical parent's response noted that the school 'has upped its game in the last few years with a much greater feel of community ... The children are very well looked after and enjoy a host of extra-curricular activities, in which the teachers are engaged.'
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well developed through assemblies and curriculum opportunities. Leaders promote pupils' understanding of the significance of British values, which are linked to the school's own values. Pupils respect differences and have been inspired by visitors who strive to achieve equality in diverse circumstances, such as a visiting Paralympic athlete and a female national rugby player.
- Leaders and governors share the aspiration to achieve excellence. Leaders welcome being challenged through purposeful work with other local schools, as well as with the local authority's improvement partner. Inspectors were able to see how effectively

teaching has improved during the past year. The school's current strong professional culture means it is well placed to sustain continuous school improvement.

- New middle leaders are just beginning to make effective use of the school's assessment information, to take account of progress from pupils' starting points into the key stage and to monitor the work of other teachers. They are enthusiastic, but have not yet had enough time to make a full contribution to school improvement.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and contribute effectively to its vision and values. Some governors are longstanding, having been with the school during a lengthy period of change. They appreciate how openly the headteacher shares information and works collaboratively with them.
- Governors bring significant skills to the school's strategic leadership. They offer effective challenge to the headteacher through performance management and by asking questions in meetings and on visits. They have high expectations for all pupils to achieve well and they challenge any gaps in progress or attainment between different pupil groups.
- Individual governors frequently visit the school to make checks on its progress. They invite leaders to report to their meetings, such as when they check the impact of additional funding for PE and sport.
- The governing body rightly has confidence in their headteacher and offers her effective support to improve the school, such as by appointing the leadership team to operate across the federated infant and junior schools. They plan to check that this team makes a difference to the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors check safeguarding arrangements rigorously. Leaders ensure that procedures are followed and all records are fit for purpose. Referral processes are clear, enabling all staff to know what they need to do if they have a concern. Clear lines of communication ensure that key people have the information they need.
- The school extends a high level of care to all pupils. Leaders do not let anything get in the way of supporting pupils to enjoy learning at school. As the school's designated lead for safeguarding, the headteacher knows all pupils well, as do other leaders. Collectively, they are tenacious in following through any concerns to ensure that vulnerable pupils and families are supported. Sometimes, this help is offered by the school's family support worker or, where appropriate, by other agencies. All parents say their children feel safe in school.
- All staff and governors understand their responsibilities. They receive regular training for their roles, and the designated lead keeps their training up to date. Checks on new staff are robust and their induction into the school ensures that they understand the signs of abuse and how to keep pupils safe from harm. Consequently, all staff are consistently vigilant.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching and learning typically ensure that pupils make at least good progress. Support and training to improve provision for mathematics have quickly become embedded practice. Other improvement strategies are more recent, such as the teaching of reading with the widespread use of high-quality books that challenge pupils.
- Leaders have developed teachers' use of assessment so that it drives their lesson planning. Assessment also enables pupils' progress to be carefully tracked. This results in well-matched intervention (additional teaching) to respond to pupils who are falling behind or who have a gap in learning. Inspectors saw that class teaching, as well as intervention outside of the classroom, supports disadvantaged pupils to make rapid gains in progress.
- The school's work to target extra support is increasingly effective. The inclusion leader builds effective relationships with parents to provide effectively for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Skilled guidance to pastoral and learning staff, as well as to teachers, enables them to tailor learning to meet pupils' social, emotional and academic needs. Precisely matched intervention gives pupils frequent practice of key skills, such as to read, write and spell key words.
- Lesson time is used very well and pupils move quickly to their learning tasks. All pupils concentrate well. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities demonstrate determination, while those who need to catch up are enthusiastic to reach the targets they are set. Teachers offer higher-level challenges to meet the needs of the most able pupils. Sometimes, however, teachers do not make sure that these pupils undertake and finish this work.
- Teachers' day-to-day teaching is well planned and, often, pupils build progressively on their prior learning. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils develop effective editing skills to improve their writing and they know exactly what grammar, punctuation and vocabulary will enhance their work.
- Teachers' use of questioning helps pupils to deepen their learning, especially in mathematics, where they tackle any misconceptions very swiftly. They ensure that pupils make good use of apparatus to develop mathematical understanding and fluency. All pupils have good opportunities to give reasons and solve problems.
- Pupils' workbooks are neatly maintained and they are rightly proud of them. They welcome teachers' feedback, which is given in line with the school's policy, because it helps them to improve their work.
- Most pupils like their homework and the opportunity to complete it at homework club. Pupils know they are expected to read regularly at home and most regularly do so. Where this is not possible, adult support is given at school.
- A few inconsistencies remain in teaching and learning. These inconsistencies are addressed through support and guidance to teachers to help them plan lessons. Enhanced teaching skills, to accelerate pupils' reading, have only recently been developed and most teachers continue to need the English leader's assistance.
- Work is not consistently well matched for pupils with low prior attainment in all lessons.

At times, it does not allow enough time for pupils to consolidate their skills before moving on to new content. This means that pupils' newly developed skills are not deepened. In some cases, this pupil group does not learn to be sufficiently independent, for example by developing self-help skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils concentrate well and work hard in lessons because they want to achieve. Older pupils strive to meet challenging learning targets, which contributes strongly to their recent rapid rates of progress.
- Pupils say there is very little bullying at school but, if it occurs, adults help to resolve it straight away. They understand about different types of bullying and Year 6 pupils were able to describe what the consequences can be. Pupils respect that there are differences between people and learn that everyone has rights, can achieve success and should be treated equally.
- Curriculum opportunities ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, such as when they are online and when they are out and about in the community. Pupils have a very sensible approach to using the internet and other technologies; for example, they know not to share passwords. They also understood why the school recently held a 'lockdown' to keep them safe in case of an incident.
- Effective provision for sports ensures that pupils learn the value of keeping themselves fit and healthy. Some pupils enjoy competition, while others like the quieter activity of Nordic walking or the pace and vigour of Zumba fitness.
- Skilful support is available for pupils whose behaviour can sometimes be challenging, including for pupils who experience anxiety. They learn to understand their emotions and find helpful ways to express how they are feeling. This enables them to settle to their learning and enjoy all the advantages of school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a positive place in which pupils enjoy their learning. They show care towards each other and to adults, and they want to uphold the school's rules and expectations. One pupil summed up the school's ethos by explaining that 'Everyone is really kind and helps you if you are stuck or worried.'
- Attendance is improving and is currently above the national average. There are robust systems in place to follow up absence. Where there are barriers to attendance, family support workers help parents to ensure that their child can benefit from being at school.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are recorded and diligently followed up. Pupils say that teachers quickly sort out any problems and adults listen carefully. Leaders have been responsive to concerns arising from a recent pupil questionnaire. This resulted in more

active opportunities at lunchtime and higher levels of supervision. Pupils say this has made lunchtimes more enjoyable and fewer incidents result.

- Pupils enjoy taking responsibilities, such as by being part of the school council or by acting as a sports leader. Year 6 pupils like to act as playground buddies for younger pupils, if they are feeling lonely in the playground.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- It has taken time for standards to rise as a consequence of leaders' improvements to the quality of teaching. In summer 2017, Year 6 pupils' attainment was higher in reading, writing and mathematics than in the previous year, although below other schools nationally. Their progress in reading improved to be in line with writing, which is at the national average. Progress in mathematics improved but remained below the national average. From their starting points into the key stage, disadvantaged pupils achieved better than other pupils nationally in writing, similarly in mathematics but less well in reading.
- Current pupils in all year groups are making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics, albeit that some Year 6 pupils are still catching up from underachievement earlier in the key stage. The differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils with the same starting points are diminishing in all subjects.
- School leaders rigorously analyse pupils' progress and frequently review it with teachers to ensure that learning strategies are effective. Teaching precisely addresses pupils' next steps in learning and strong progress is evident in mathematics and reading, to match that in writing. Consequently, a high proportion of pupils, in all year groups, are working at levels expected for their age. Year 6 pupils say they feel well prepared for the next stage of their education. Their work in class confirms this to be the case.
- Current pupils' strong rates of progress are due to teachers' good subject knowledge and its effect on their learning. Pupils write readily and with increasing fluency and stamina and approach writing tasks with a sense of purpose and consideration of the audience. Pupils' writing is increasingly sophisticated, as a result of exposure to challenging reading books that introduce interesting ideas and vocabulary.
- Outcomes across the curriculum are strong in some subjects, such as PE and music, and to a lesser extent in others, such as computing, history and science. In these, and the remaining subjects, teachers are developing systems to assess pupils' progress over time.
- The school's most able pupils are given work that challenges them and they achieve high standards, particularly in writing and mathematics. However, teachers do not have consistent expectations that pupils will rise to meet high levels of challenge in reading.
- On occasions, the legacy of previous underachievement persists, especially for pupils with low prior attainment. This group includes some disadvantaged pupils, some who have SEN and/or disabilities and a proportion who are both disadvantaged and have SEN and/or disabilities. In some classes, these pupils do not catch up quickly enough to achieve their best. Leaders are aware of this and are tackling the improvements that need to be made.

School details

Unique reference number	109932
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10037834

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Kidd
Headteacher	Florence Rostron (Executive headteacher)
Telephone number	01189 428727
Website	www.calcotschools.co.uk
Email address	office@c-jun.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school has three classes in each year group. It is federated with Calcot Infant School under one governing body and is led by an executive headteacher.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed. There have been a large number of staff changes that have created some turbulence for the school.
- Two thirds of pupils who attend the school are White British, with a range of other ethnic groups represented. Fewer pupils than the national average speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than that found in primary schools nationally. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to that found in most primary schools.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club that are run by the

governing body.

- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for primary schools.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons, and undertook five focused learning walks, making short classroom visits to check on the progress of different pupil groups. Almost all of the visits were carried out with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or another leader.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair. She also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the school's published information for past three years and information on its website. They examined a wide range of school documents, including information relating to safeguarding, attendance, funding for disadvantaged pupils, school improvement evaluation and planning, information about the curriculum and a sample of minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's own assessment information and scrutinised a large sample of pupils' books, particularly in English and mathematics. They heard pupils read in Years 3 and 6.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and lunchtimes, in lessons and in assembly, and visited some of the school's clubs. To gain their views of the school, inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and met groups of pupils outside the classroom.
- In addition to speaking to a number of parents, inspectors considered written comments from 35 of them, and 42 responses to the Parent View survey. They considered 12 staff survey responses and 161 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.

Inspection team

Linda Jacobs, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lea Hannam	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Francis	Ofsted Inspector

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