

# Chaulden Junior School

School Row, Chaulden, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 2JU

## Inspection dates

6–7 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is not consistently strong enough to secure at least good progress for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Sometimes teachers do not use assessment information carefully enough to ensure that tasks are set at the right level to challenge pupils, including the most able.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils vary and are not always high enough. Teachers often accept work which is not pupils' best. Pupils are too dependent on adults and do not always think for themselves.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average in 2016 and 2017, and in mathematics significantly so.
- The curriculum motivates pupils to learn. However, subject leaders do not have an accurate picture of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Some teachers do not provide pupils with the chance to discuss and explain their thinking. As a result, too many pupils do not have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and skills.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and as a result have stopped the decline in standards.
- Science is taught well and pupils make good progress through a range of scientific investigations.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted effectively. A strong ethos of respect exists throughout the school.
- Leaders have the capacity to build on recent improvements. They have high aspirations for pupils and staff.
- Leadership of special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is strong, and pupils identified as needing extra support make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they have developed positive relationships with each other.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to rapidly improve outcomes for pupils by:
  - teachers having consistently high expectations of what pupils will achieve in lessons and of the quality of their work
  - teachers using assessment information accurately to set work that is consistently well matched to pupils' abilities, in particular disadvantaged pupils and the most able
  - ensuring that the school's approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics are used consistently by teachers.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management in order to secure sustained improvement by:
  - developing the role of subject leaders, other than English and mathematics, so that they become more skilled in supporting colleagues and monitoring the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The school has experienced a turbulent time regarding staffing since the previous inspection. Thanks to the work of the academy trust and the current senior leadership team, staffing is now more stable, and this is having a positive impact on the improvements seen during the inspection. As a result, the leadership team has the capacity to ensure that the improvements seen continue and to enable pupils to receive a consistently good standard of education.
- Leaders are determined to raise standards and are aspirational for pupils and staff. They have recently introduced positive changes to the way reading, writing and mathematics are taught. For example, progress in mathematics is evident where teachers consistently use 'journaling' as an effective way for pupils to explain their thinking.
- Leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is rigorous enough to ensure that where weaknesses have been identified they are becoming addressed quickly. Positive support has been provided through the academy trust and from school leaders to improve the quality of teaching.
- The leader for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities carefully monitors the progress and attainment of these pupils. This is particularly the case for pupils in the school's speech and language base where teaching is strong and pupils make good progress. The school's assessment records show that these pupils' social and emotional needs are well met. This enables them to participate effectively in class.
- Actions taken by leaders and governors have halted the decline in pupils' attainment and rates of progress over time in 2016 and 2017. As a result, the progress of the current Year 6 pupils is improving.
- Until recently, disadvantaged pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics were well below those of other pupils nationally. As a result of more rigorous monitoring and an improving and stable teaching team, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is also improving. However, this progress is not yet rapid enough for their achievement to be consistently good across the school.
- The overwhelming majority of staff said that they feel proud to work at the school and stated that they value the opportunities they receive for professional development.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective. Discussions with pupils show that they are tolerant and have a good understanding of spirituality. The effectiveness of the school's work to support pupils' understanding of cultural diversity, away from their local area, is also strong.
- Leaders present a secure rationale for their curriculum. The school values, together with a focus on enabling pupils to develop their own opinions and collaborate with one other, underpin the curriculum at Chaulden Junior School. Recent initiatives, such as work to develop a 'Big Question' to engage and enthuse pupils, complement this well. Pupils benefit from a curriculum which has been designed to make learning meaningful and fun. Pupils particularly enjoy science lessons. They spoke positively of the challenge provided and the progress that they have made in science. This was seen in

a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were keen to find out how bread rises, and in a Year 3 lesson when they learned about chemical reactions.

- Leaders are rightly proud of pupils' sporting achievements. The physical education and sport premium is used very effectively to support pupils' physical development and their enjoyment of sport. There is a wide range of sports clubs, both at lunchtime and after school.
- Parents are supportive of the work of the school. They value the work of the new leadership team and make comments such as, 'This school is fantastic. I am so happy my child is at this school.' Parents appreciate the work that leaders responsible for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make and offered comments such as, 'The pupils are well looked after and supported on their journey through the school.'
- Effective training and support are enabling subject leaders to contribute more fully to improving the quality of teaching for the subjects they lead. However, senior leaders are aware that checks on pupils' progress in curriculum subjects other than English and mathematics are at an early stage.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors show a high level of commitment to the school. They make frequent visits and talk to staff and pupils to find out about everyday school life. They observe meetings between leaders and staff to discuss pupils' progress. In these ways, they learn about how policies work in practice.
- Governors have good capacity to support school leaders in their pursuit of further improvement. This is because they have systems in place which enable them to check how well the school is performing in a timely way.
- The current chair of governors has ensured that the governing body now brings a greater degree of challenge for school leaders.
- Governors are effective in fulfilling their statutory duties in regard to safeguarding. The governor with oversight of safeguarding makes regular visits to check on the school's policies and procedures. She is able to speak knowledgeably about this aspect of the school's work.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The curriculum is well developed to help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are taught to manage the risks facing them in their life beyond the school gates, including when using the internet and mobile technology.
- Leaders have successfully created a culture where everyone knows the importance of keeping pupils safe. Rigorous checks on new staff, supported by timely training and updates, ensure that staff know what to do if they are concerned that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff know what to do should they become concerned about a pupil's welfare. Newly appointed staff receive effective support in understanding the school's policies and procedures.

- Leaders' work to support vulnerable pupils and families is a strength of the school. There is a strong culture of watchful care throughout the school. Staff make sure that they address any welfare or child protection concerns quickly and decisively. The work of the school's pastoral support worker is a particular strength in supporting vulnerable pupils.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent, and this has led to variations in pupils' progress across the school. Teaching does not always build strongly on pupils' prior learning in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- Teachers have developed strong questioning skills. However, pupils are not all encouraged to volunteer answers, and teachers frequently ask the first pupil who responds to the question. When this happens, teachers do not always successfully address misconceptions, and opportunities are missed to move pupils on in their learning.
- The quality of teaching across the school has some strengths but it is not yet consistently strong enough to overcome the gaps in pupils' learning caused by earlier weaknesses in teaching. At times, for example, teachers miss the opportunity to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable because the level of challenge is not high enough. As a result, too many pupils do not reach the standard expected for their age, or better.
- Actions taken by senior leaders since the start of this academic year are bringing about improvements in teaching. Teachers' skills are being sharpened through targeted support and training and regular opportunities to learn from the strongest teaching that exists in the school and across the academy trust. As a result, the quality of teaching, particularly in reading and mathematics, is proving more effective and pupils have begun to make faster progress from their starting points.
- Analysis of pupils' work shows that, increasingly, literacy and mathematical skills are being developed across a range of subjects. However, too few opportunities are provided to enable pupils to build up their stamina to be able to sustain their ideas when they write at length. At times, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and do in lessons are not high enough. As a result, pupils produce less work than they could and present work that is often untidy.
- Sometimes teachers are not using their knowledge of what pupils can already do carefully enough to provide challenge for all pupils. Sometimes the work that pupils complete is too easy and does not challenge them.
- Leaders hold regular meetings with teachers to discuss the progress of disadvantaged pupils. However, teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' needs well enough to provide effective support. As a result, some disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants in class. Pupils use resources to support their learning well and, wherever possible, they are encouraged to be independent in their learning. Where adult support is necessary, support is appropriate and adults are skilled in providing the right level of

challenge.

- Teachers are creative in their approach to developing pupils' knowledge and skills in the wider curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about other cultures, events in history and a range of geographical locations. Teachers skilfully thread science into learning across the curriculum; for example, pupils create detailed graphs following a scientific investigation.
- Teachers work hard to make their classrooms bright and well organised. High-quality displays celebrate pupils' work and reflect the varied activities that pupils enjoy.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff treat pupils with the utmost consideration and ensure that the school makes everyone feel welcome and valued. Pupils new to the school, and those new to speaking English, are made very welcome and settle quickly. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other and the adults who care for them.
- Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school and enjoy taking on responsible roles, such as school council members.
- Pupils generally listen carefully to their teachers and teaching assistants and many settle quickly to work when asked to do so. However, at times pupils are much too dependent on an adult. They seek reassurance about what they have been asked to do rather than taking responsibility and thinking for themselves before seeking help.
- The system for checking attendance is rigorous and well organised. The need for regular attendance has a high profile and pupils understand how important it is to be punctual for school. Leaders work with care and consideration when working with pupils who display anxiety about attending school. The school's pastoral support worker works effectively with these pupils to improve their attendance.
- All staff, and the very large majority of parents who completed the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, agree that pupils are safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. For example, pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep safe when using the internet. Pupils also understand the need to eat sensibly and keep fit in order to stay healthy.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and know that bullying can take different forms. They say that, although pupils sometimes 'fall out', bullying is rarely a problem for them. They are very confident that adults would not tolerate any bullying or unkind behaviour. School records show that incidents of bullying are rare, but that when they do occur they are managed effectively by leaders and staff.
- Leaders and staff are skilled in supporting the social and emotional needs of pupils. Pupils of all ages who take part in the regular programme of activities in the speech and language base provision receive effective support to develop appropriate learning and social skills. Pupils relish the time they spend in this well-resourced area of the school. As a result, they are increasingly settled and ready to learn when they return to

their classes.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Overall, pupils' attendance is broadly average. Leaders take swift and decisive action to support and challenge families to address issues when needed.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and most work conscientiously. Incidents of low-level disruption are rare as the majority of pupils are self-disciplined and their conduct in classrooms and on the playground is good.
- Pupils' conduct around school is calm and orderly. They typically behave with courtesy and respect towards others. Lunchtimes and playtimes were observed to be happy, social occasions. Pupils readily share the good range of equipment provided, such as bats, balls and hoops. Pupils behave well in lessons and in assembly. They move around the school sensibly.
- Behaviour systems encourage positive attitudes to learning, and the few incidents of misbehaviour are swiftly and deftly addressed. Pupils told inspectors that they are expected to behave well.
- Leaders and staff keep detailed online records of behaviour, looking carefully for any patterns or recurring issues. The sharing of information online means that instances of poor behaviour are rare and dealt with in a fitting manner.
- On occasion, the behaviour of pupils in class is not as focused as it could be. This is due to the tasks set not meeting the needs of pupils in the class and being either too easy or too difficult. As a result, some pupils become distracted.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress has varied since the previous inspection as a result of high staff turnover at all levels and weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the past. This is now being addressed by leaders and there are improvements being made. However, there are still inconsistencies and pupil outcomes across the school are not consistently good.
- Pupils' workbooks show that, although pupils are making progress, this is not rapid enough to counter the weaker progress made in previous years. This is particularly the case for current Year 6 pupils, where much of the teaching is spent filling gaps in knowledge that should have been imparted in previous years. There is some evidence of better progress and attainment in pupils' workbooks in some other year groups.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2016 and 2017 were below average. Teachers are not using their knowledge of what these pupils can do well enough to set tasks that consistently allow for rapid progress. Consequently, some disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Work in pupils' books shows that inconsistencies in teaching have led to a variation in the progress that pupils make. Where pupils make good progress they are, for

example, practising their writing in longer pieces, exploring their thinking in mathematics and writing explanations in science. However this is not consistent across the school. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning is variable in English and mathematics, as well as in a range of other subjects.

- The most able pupils are not routinely challenged. Too many do not develop the deep understanding needed to achieve the higher standards. Across the school, work in pupils' books shows that too few of the most able pupils are working confidently at the higher standards expected for their age. Pupils told inspectors that they would like more challenge.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They are keen to use the school library and read books from the classroom. Pupils speak confidently about the books they have read. Older pupils told inspectors how important it was to read a range of challenging texts to develop strong comprehension skills.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make at least the progress expected of them and some do better than this because of well-targeted support.



## School details

Unique reference number	139550
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10053851

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	164
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Kath Burton
Headteacher	Moira White
Telephone number	01442 395758
Website	<a href="http://www.chauldenjm.herts.sch.uk">www.chauldenjm.herts.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@chauldenjm.herts.sch.uk">head@chauldenjm.herts.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	8–9 January 2015

## Information about this school

- Chaulden Junior School is a smaller than average-sized junior school.
- About three quarters of the pupils are White British.
- The percentage of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant is above average.
- The school was previously inspected in January 2015, when it was inspected for the first time as an academy sponsored by the Spiral Academy Trust.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has seen a high turnover of staff. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2016.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for seven pupils across the school who have speech and language difficulties. This provision is funded by the local authority and managed by the school. Pupils receive specialist teaching in 'the base' (Forest Class) and some are integrated into classes for some of their learning.

- The school provides an after-school club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## // Information about this inspection

- Inspectors evaluated learning across the school. Many lessons were visited jointly with the headteacher.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke to pupils and looked at their work to find out how well they are learning.
- Inspectors looked at a large sample of pupils' books across a range of subjects to evaluate pupils' learning in English, mathematics and across the wider curriculum. Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading, and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors talked to groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning to find out what it is like to be a pupil at Chaulden Junior School. Inspectors also considered the 33 responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime. An inspector observed assembly.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, subject leaders, the academy trust, the chair of governors, a group of governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered from the 31 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 28 free-text responses. An inspector also had conversations with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of the 16 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the school's evaluation of its own performance, and the school's development plan.

## Inspection team

Joseph Figg, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Edel Gillespie

Ofsted Inspector

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