

Castle Hill Junior School

Dryden Road, Ipswich, IP1 6QD

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make slow progress in reading, writing and mathematics because the quality of teaching is not good enough.
- Teachers do not use information about what pupils already know and can do to set challenging, interesting work in lessons, or adjust the difficulty for different ability groups.
- Poor classroom behaviour is a major factor limiting progress and attainment. Pupils are not encouraged to show pride in their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not share best practice to improve their skills.
- Attendance is low. Persistent absence and exclusions show little sign of improvement.
- The senior leadership team has suffered from changes in personnel and has been ineffective in improving teaching and achievement.
- Subject leaders are not adequately involved in the monitoring of teaching, learning and behaviour. Too much work falls to the new headteacher.
- Governors have not monitored the work of the school closely enough to hold leaders to account for improving it. There are vacancies for parent governors on the governing body and no candidates for the two places.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has identified the right areas for improving the school and has clear plans to address them.
- Pupils in the specialist support class are taught and looked after well.
- Pupils are kept safe in school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons taught by 10 staff, including in the specialist support class. Three joint observations were carried out with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed a range of activities to support individuals and small groups of pupils.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff and two groups of pupils. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 16 staff. Inspectors spoke to parents, including those attending a parents' early evening session at the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They also looked at the school's development and raising attainment plans, the findings of a recent local authority review, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, a wide range of procedures and policies, and the school's arrangements for the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors attended an assembly. They carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Piers Ranger	Additional Inspector
Aileen Thomas	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Castle Hill Junior School is an average-sized junior school.
- The very large majority of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. The proportion supported through school action is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional government funding for particular groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils from service families and those in the care of the local authority.
- In 2013, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has specifically resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This specialist support class has 20 full-time places for pupils with moderate and complex learning difficulties from across the local authority. At present, 14 pupils are catered for in this class.
- A very small number of pupils are educated away from the school by the local authority, or at a local pupil referral unit.
- Pupils are able to attend a breakfast club run at the infants' school which shares the school site. This was not included in the inspection.
- The new headteacher has been in post since September 2012 in his first headship.
- The school has experienced some recent staffing turbulence, particularly on the senior leadership team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching and learning consistently good or better by:
 - setting challenging work, especially for the more-able pupils
 - using information on pupils' attainment and progress to make sure lesson activities meet the needs of all ability groups
 - insisting on better standards of spelling and presentation across the school
 - establishing a consistent approach to assessment and marking to help pupils improve their work
 - enabling teachers and teaching assistants to observe and share best practice in classroom strategies in this school and in other schools.
- Raise achievement by:
 - enabling pupils to read and to write at length, and to develop more interest in mathematics
 - developing more effective strategies to close the gap for pupils eligible for the pupil premium
 - ensuring that all pupils are clear about the standards of work and behaviour expected in lessons.

- Improve behaviour by:
 - eliminating low-level disruption
 - raising attendance, and reducing persistent absence and exclusion rates
 - responding to incidents of poor behaviour effectively.

- Raise the quality of leadership and management by:
 - establishing a permanent senior leadership team as soon as possible
 - developing the roles of subject leaders in monitoring and improving teaching, achievement and behaviour
 - ensuring that the curriculum systematically builds up pupils' skills
 - involving governors fully in strategic planning
 - ensuring that parent governor vacancies are filled on the governing body.

Ofsted has made recommendations for action on governance to the authority responsible for the school. The local authority has recently carried out an external review of governance which had not yet been reported back at the time of the inspection. If not carried out within this review, any external review of governance should include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Poor standards have not improved over time, and current rates of progress vary but are still too low. The proportions of pupils meeting and exceeding nationally expected progress are below average in all subjects and have been for some time.
- From above average starting points, too many pupils leave the school with below average attainment. The school's own assessments when pupils enter Year 3 show some variation from the point of entry, but the school accepts that pupils are not making enough progress. Current data indicate that the school is unlikely to meet the government floor standards this year.
- Attainment in English has been significantly below national averages in writing and reading. Pupils are hesitant in their approach to breaking down words into letters and sounds. Reading is not well promoted across the school, and opportunities to read aloud are not provided consistently in all classes. Poor spelling has an impact on writing skills. Very poor presentation skills are another indication of pupils' lack of engagement with writing.
- Attainment in mathematics has also been significantly below average. The school acted recently to address this by providing additional training and support for staff, but it is too early to see any impact on progress and attainment. The range of resources and approaches used to teach mathematics are not sufficiently interesting or stimulating, especially for the least able pupils.
- Pupils have access to an extra teacher in Year 6 to help with the development of literacy and numeracy skills, but not in the rest of the school. At present, literacy and numeracy skills are not consistently developed or reinforced in other subjects.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making less progress than their classmates, especially in reading and mathematics, and in Years 4 and 6. In 2013 eligible pupils in Year 6 were two terms behind their peers in writing, three terms in mathematics and four terms in reading. School data indicate that current progress is still inadequate and the attainment gaps show little sign of closing. Very few specific support activities are taking place for eligible pupils, and those occurring are not monitored for their impact on pupils' progress.
- The few pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates.
- Pupils who are educated in alternative provision away from the school are making similar progress rates to their peers. The school checks their progress and attendance in conjunction with the home-school liaison officer and the local education welfare officer.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are also making inadequate progress. Pupils in the specialist support class make better progress than their colleagues in the mainstream settings because their needs are more quickly identified and securely met. Support staff are clear about their roles and changes to activities are well managed. The specialist support class manager is new to the post of acting SENCO and is still developing strategies for improvement.
- While some pupils appreciate what their school is trying to offer them and almost all would recommend it, too many are not making enough progress and are not focused on improving their work in the classroom. The range of clubs on offer and a new emphasis on music have not

had an impact on attainment and progress generally. Due to the variations in expectations and teaching quality, pupils do not have equal opportunities to progress.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- There has been little sign of improvement in the quality of teaching since the local authority review in October 2013. It remains inadequate.
- Teachers' expectations are too low, progress is not carefully monitored and pupils, including the more able, quickly lose interest in lessons. Teachers do not check carefully enough to ensure that pupils make the progress they should. More-able pupils are often held back in their efforts to reach the higher levels. The results of assessments, support activities and progress meetings are not reflected in lesson planning.
- Weak teaching in the school is characterised by poor behaviour management and a lack of communication about the expected quality and presentation of pupils' work. Teachers and teaching assistants too often miss when pupils stop working in lessons and do not challenge them to work harder. Lessons are not always planned to ensure that pupils' learning is sustained throughout the lesson.
- Little work is on display to illustrate the high quality the school wants to encourage. Displays in classrooms are neither attractive nor sufficiently visible. Teachers do not consistently encourage pupils to take pride in their work, as reflected in its very poor presentation.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are not being taught effectively. The checks made on pupils' progress and understanding are ineffective, behaviour is not well managed and pupils are not engaged by the resources and methods used to teach these subjects. Difficulties with spelling are not being tackled.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from some good teaching in the specialist support class. However, they do not otherwise prosper because the skills they acquire in small 'intervention' groups are not transferred to the work going on in the classroom. The impact of these interventions is not closely monitored to make adjustments to teaching and so improve learning.
- Where teaching is effective, support staff are clear about their roles and support learning at a good rate for both groups and individuals. Good use is made of specific objects to demonstrate and reinforce learning, tasks are clearly explained and on-going assessment is effective. However, other staff do not have enough opportunities to observe best practice in classroom skills, either within the school or in other schools.
- Recently introduced new procedures for assessment and marking are being used with increasing consistency. However, exceptions are still evident and pupils are still receiving mixed messages about the standards expected of them. Work is regularly marked, but teachers do not insist that pupils respond to the advice given to eliminate repetition of errors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Their lack of engagement in lessons frequently leads to disrupted learning. Behaviour is often better around the school, for example in the corridors, than in lessons. The school has failed to deal effectively with behaviour in the classroom. Too often, as seen in 34 instances so far this term, pupils are sent to the inclusion room and the

problem is not tackled at the source to reach long-term solutions.

- The school has recently revised its behaviour policy to ensure that expectations in lessons and around the school are consistent and that incidents are handled in clearly defined ways. The changes have not yet had a clear impact across the school. As one pupil said, 'Some people let your class down because certain people won't follow the rules.' When asked what they might like to change, another pupil said, 'Get rid of all the rudeness and the hurt.'
- The number of parents who said through the online survey that behaviour was good was balanced by an equal number saying it was not good enough. The school arranged two meetings recently to address parental concerns about behaviour, but no parents attended on either occasion. The recent appointment of a home-school liaison officer means that issues regarding behaviour and attendance can now be more quickly addressed.
- Pupils are aware of many of the different forms that bullying can take, for example, by calling others names, but some were less clear about cyber-bullying. Pupils felt that they could always tell someone if there was a problem and that 'most of the time' it was sorted out quickly. Incidents of bullying are recorded electronically.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Although the inspectors agree with pupils and their parents that pupils are safe within the school, the related procedures are not systematic enough. However, the school acted promptly to address failings pointed out by inspectors. The safeguarding policy is due to be reviewed at the next governing body meeting. Safeguarding procedures are now more consistently applied than in the past, and now meet requirements.
- Attendance is low and shows little sign of improvement. Persistent absence rates remain high. Permanent exclusions have increased and there have been eight fixed-term exclusions so far this term, mostly relating to poor behaviour in classroom settings.
- Incidents involving disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have increased. The number of racist incidents so far this year nearly matches that for the whole of last year. However, these incidents have had very little impact on pupils' safety because the school has acted promptly to address them.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Too much responsibility for the leadership and management of the school currently falls solely on the shoulders of the new headteacher. The senior leadership team is in a state of flux following recent staffing turbulence. The roles of middle managers are not well developed. Governors recognise that they still have much work to do to take the school forward. As a result, the school does not at present have the capacity for sustained improvement.
- The headteacher has worked effectively to address some of the issues facing the school. Staff have recognised the initial impact of the steps he has taken, but it is still too early to see if that impact will be sustained. Two members of the senior leadership team are on long-term sick leave. A number of leaders appointed recently have limited experience of these roles. The acting leader of special educational needs had only been in post for a week at the time of the inspection.
- The new subject leaders monitor assessment and marking, but are not yet involved in carrying out lesson observations to identify ways in which attainment and progress rates can rise and to

identify best practice.

- The targets set for teachers are now more rigorously linked to pupils' progress, and are in line with the national 'teachers' standards'. However, it has taken too long for this to happen. The school is working to develop its methods for managing the performance of teaching assistants to improve learning.
- The curriculum is inadequate. It lacks consistency and continuity across and within year groups, so pupils do not build up their learning systematically. No-one currently oversees this area due to the pressures on the headteacher and the relative inexperience of subject leaders. Pupils' lack of engagement with the subjects taught is reflected in the behavioural problems in too many classrooms.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement. Pupils have few opportunities to develop spiritually or fire their imagination. Promotion of cultural understanding is best seen in links with a school in Uganda. Although social and moral aspects are reinforced in assemblies, the school's present difficulties with behaviour mean that this aspect is not promoted effectively enough.
- Sports funding has been used to provide additional outside support and staff training. Extra lunchtime and club activities are now offered, but the impact of these initiatives is not yet evident in pupils' attitudes and involvement.
- Support from the local authority was provided following the headteacher's analysis of the school, and at his request, but with little impact on raising standards and the quality of teaching. Its review in October 2013 expressed concern about all areas.
- The school has increased its links with the local infants' school on the same site. Shared initiatives now include a joint business manager and home-school liaison officer.
- Leaders provide regular newsletters to update parents on what is going on in the school. Parents spoken to during the inspection feel that the process of improvement has accelerated under the new headteacher.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is inadequate. Governors are supportive of the school but recognise they are not involved enough in monitoring what is going on, including through regular visits. Governors have identified the need to reinforce leadership and management in order to better support the headteacher, but have made limited progress in doing so. Their meeting records show that they challenge leaders over the school's performance, but rarely follow this up to see that issues have been fully addressed or resolved. New policies and procedures are not yet embedded. Governors have not spread responsibility for implementing the actions in the school development plan across the team of senior and middle leaders.
 - The governors' analysis of the impact of pupil premium spending has not led to swift enough improvements in this area. Training in the use and meaning of performance data has not been used effectively to hold leaders to account or to tackle underperformance. They do not review teaching regularly enough to have a clear awareness of its quality. Links with parents are an additional area for development. Although some parents are governors under other designations, there are at present two parent vacancies on the governing body and no candidates.

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	124661
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	430804

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Dawson
Headteacher	Daniel Jones
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2012
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