

Lawn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112779
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	378558
Inspection dates	28–29 February 2012
Lead inspector	Jane Melbourne HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Wilkes
Headteacher	Penelope Bennett
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Melbourne

Her Majesty's Inspector

Malcolm Johnstone

Additional inspector

Laura Kearney

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 15 teachers, visited 23 lessons and six sessions of phonics (sounds that letters make). They held meetings with two members of the governing body, the headteacher, staff and groups of pupils. The work of the school was observed, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, assessment information, lesson plans, pupils' work, school safety procedures and information logs, and responses to questionnaires from 208 parents and carers, 97 pupils and 28 members of staff. The inspector also took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Information about the school

Lawn Primary is a larger-than-average primary school. The majority of pupils are White British, with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds or at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average, as is the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The school meets the government's floor standards for attainment.

The school received a personal, social, and health education (PSHE) subject visit in July 2010. The school has a partnership with a private childcare provider which offers on site pre-school provision for three and four-year-old children and before- and after-school care for the school's pupils. This was separately inspected.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not a good school because some issues remain from the previous inspection. The school has taken steps to strengthen school leadership; there is now a programme for monitoring the work of the school in place. However, there is insufficient rigour in monitoring the impact of the changes on the progress of pupils.
- There is some good teaching practice worthy of sharing at the top end of the school. Leaders and managers have not ensured that the quality of teaching is of a consistently good or better standard across the school, although inadequate teaching has virtually been eliminated. Staff monitor pupils' literacy and numeracy work regularly but evaluation is ineffective, and too little action is taken as a result.
- An above-average proportion of pupils achieve above the national average in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6, although not enough pupils achieve the higher levels of which they are capable. This is because they are not always sufficiently clear about how to improve and staff's expectations are not consistently high enough as they move across the school. Pupils' work in books is often poorly presented and shows a lack of consistent high quality teaching in phonics and spellings.
- Variation in the quality of teaching means that pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. The new 'learning challenge' curriculum is working well in raising pupils' interest and motivation in other subjects, but teaching in English and mathematics is less vibrant and does not ensure that pupil progress is continuous. Pupils in Key Stage 1 in particular have too few opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills across other subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour is well managed in Key Stage 2 and expectations are clear. In Key Stage 1, pupils' behaviour can occasionally be disruptive to lessons and to play at break times.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2013, improve the consistency of teaching across the school by:
 - developing staff confidence in delivering suitable and systematic programmes for phonics and spellings
 - having higher expectations for pupils' presentation of their work
 - providing regular opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills
 - using assessment to better adapt the work to the needs of pupils of all abilities
 - giving greater consideration to the quality of activities and their impact on learning
 - making better use of target setting and developmental marking so that all pupils understand how to improve their work
 - use less testing and make learning as exciting in core subjects as in the learning challenge curriculum
 - ensuring pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 1, have clear and consistent boundaries for their behaviour.

- By the end of the academic year 2011–12, improve the leadership and management of the school at all levels by:
 - maintaining the rigour of monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work and to ensure consistency across the school
 - specifically evaluating the impact of teaching and initiatives on pupils' learning and progress
 - developing a collaborative approach to curriculum planning to ensure there is continuity of learning across all subjects and year groups.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children join the Reception class with knowledge and skills which are generally above those expected for their age. Sound teaching ensures that, by the end of the Reception Year, children are above average when they start Year 1.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but with slightly better progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. Some parents of pupils in Key Stage 1 do not believe their children are making as much progress as they could and inspectors agree. Nevertheless, because of pupils' above-average starting points, their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 remains higher than the national average overall. In the 2011 end of Year 2 assessments, pupils were the equivalent of around a term ahead in reading and writing and around six months ahead in mathematics. The school identified that some behavioural issues amongst the boys had led to their performance not being quite as good as the girls. There has been a gradual drift in attainment over the past few years which the school attributes to a lack of structure and rigour in the teaching of phonics.

In Key Stage 2, girls performed slightly better than the boys in writing and the boys performed above the girls in mathematics. The school has introduced initiatives through the curriculum to better engage the boys in writing. Pupils' progress is slower in the lower half of Key Stage 2 compared to the accelerated progress pupils make through the improved quality of teaching in the top half of Key Stage 2. Having made satisfactory progress overall, in the 2011 end of Year 6 assessments pupils left the school with attainment which exceeded the national average by around two terms in both English (reading and writing) and mathematics. However, this is not as good as they could have achieved had their progress been more consistent across the whole of the key stage. As with all pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly inconsistent progress across the school. Although their achievement is slightly below the other pupils, it is still above pupils with similar needs nationally at the end of both key stages.

Quality of teaching

A very small minority of parents believe that teaching is inconsistent across the school and inspectors agree. Target setting has not been sufficiently robust across the school and most teachers have not had sufficiently high expectations of each pupil. The marking of pupils' work does not always follow the school's marking policy. Pupils do not sufficiently understand what they need to do to improve or reach the next level. They are not always given sufficient time to correct or better present their work.

In the best lessons, the pace of teaching is good and pupils are excited about their learning and get down to independent working quickly. They are clear about the time available and what is expected of them. High quality and good teaching is typified by a rigorous use of pupils' previous knowledge and skills and a continual check of what pupils are learning throughout the lesson. The teaching is continually adapted and teachers are skilled in their questioning and demonstrate that they value pupils' ideas and opinions. In the satisfactory or weaker lessons, staff are less confident in using ongoing assessment to influence their lesson planning. Pupils sometimes repeat what they have already learnt and the activities are too similar from one year to the next, and for each group within the class. In these lessons, pupils often produce insufficient work. Where staff have good subject knowledge, subject specific vocabulary is used effectively, particularly in science and mathematics. This is not so in all lessons. The teaching of reading produces confident readers, as was found by inspectors when they heard pupils read. However, the quality of the teaching in phonics is inconsistent and, consequently, pupils do not always use their phonic knowledge accurately in their writing.

Teaching in Year 5 has been enhanced by providing an additional teacher, enabling pupils to be taught in smaller groups in English and mathematics. Within these teaching groups, work is adapted to the needs of the pupils across each group, so that every pupil is well challenged. The school has also invested in additional teaching support across the cohort which is proving beneficial to pupils' progress.

The curriculum has been reviewed with some success, and this has further developed pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are

enthused by a range of stimulating cross-curricular learning experiences which are enhanced by regular trips out of school and visitors. For example, inspectors witnessed pupils using a good range of design and technology skills being interspersed with using and applying their mathematical and literacy skills in a Year 5 'Willie Wonka' lesson. This was followed up with a further collaborative session where pupils made their own amazing flavoured chocolates. Similarly, in Year 6, pupils were learning geographically about life in the rainforest, which had been stimulated by a visit from an expert on rainforest animals. There was enjoyment and purpose to their subsequent use of technology to make short film clips about the subject. However, the same vibrancy and richness of activities is not seen in English and mathematics lessons, which are overloaded by pupils completing worksheets and by too many practice tests. Some of the activities are not sufficiently thought through for the added value they give to pupils' learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Although behaviour is satisfactory overall, behaviour management is inconsistent across the school, which was also acknowledged by a small minority of parents, staff and pupils. Many of the younger pupils need continual reminders of what is acceptable behaviour. They do not always take pride in their school or make appropriate choices, for example in using the litter bins in the playground or clearing away well at the end of a session. There is too much squabbling in the Key Stage 1 playground at break times, although this is managed more effectively at lunchtimes as lunchtime supervisors are trained as play leaders and engage many of the children well in purposeful activity. Year 6 pupils are buddies with the younger pupils and act as good ambassadors, reinforcing right and wrong and supporting Key Stage 1 pupils who are alone. Effective strategies in Key Stage 2 for managing behaviour in lessons mean that pupils are more settled further up the school. Here, learning is not disrupted by inappropriate behaviour and pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well. They are included well in lessons and extra-curricular activities, and behave well. Some pupils admitted to having experienced bullying behaviour, for example, some mild aggression towards each other in the playground or name calling. However, the large majority of pupils acknowledge that the school has dealt with this satisfactorily. Following a few parental concerns regarding bullying, the inspection team looked into this but were also satisfied that this was handled appropriately. Pupils confirm that they feel safe in school. They all have a good awareness of how to keep safe as the school has a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme which covers topics such as road safety, drugs awareness, internet safety and cyber-bullying.

Attendance at the school is above average. However, punctuality is an issue for a small number of families. The effective work of the learning mentor and sound partnership working with outside agencies ensure that the school is doing all it can to address this.

Leadership and management

The inspection team agree with some of the comments made by staff and a few parents expressing the view that leadership and management roles and

responsibilities are not sufficiently clearly defined or understood. The school development plan shows that leaders, including members of the governing body, have an awareness of the main strengths and weakness of the school. Core subject development plans also accurately reflect the main priorities in each curriculum area. Improvements over time include significantly reducing inadequate teaching overall and addressing the issue of improving achievement in Year 5, including tackling gender differences in achievement. The track record of improvement at the top end of the school reflects the school's overall capacity to improve. However, some improvements are still in their infancy, for example in adapting a school-wide strategy for marking pupils' work, and impact has been slow. There has been a lack of rigour in following up key initiatives to assess their effectiveness in raising achievement. Whilst there has been a main focus on work scrutiny in literacy and numeracy across the school, there has been minimal monitoring of the wider curriculum, or evaluating the impact of this on pupil achievement as a whole.

The 'learning challenge' curriculum is developing well and its implementation has enlivened learning for pupils, effectively promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Curriculum development also indicates staff's commitment to school improvement and an overall capacity to improve. The curriculum is broadly matched to pupils' needs, but there is insufficient consideration of progression from year group to year group and across the school to ensure continuity of learning for pupils. The best teaching practice in the school has not been disseminated. The governing body ensures that it meets its statutory duties, although there is insufficient rigour in some aspects of its work. For example, the welfare and learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not always checked thoroughly and routinely. Governor visits are not sufficiently focussed on the main themes identified on the school development plan. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are thorough and meet current requirements. The governing body ensures there are equal opportunities for all pupils, including any pupils who are looked after or who are considered likely to be vulnerable. It has made appropriate arrangements for any pupils who are new to the country and in the early stages of learning English.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

1 March 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Lawn Primary School, Derby, DE22 2QR

Thank you for the help that you gave to us when we recently visited your school. You were very keen to share with us what you thought and it is pleasing to know that the vast majority of you enjoy coming to school. We also spoke with school staff and used the feedback from the questionnaires, including those completed by your parents or carers. Everyone's views are really important to us. Some of you, and some of your parents, thought that not all pupils were as well behaved as they should be and that there was evidence of bullying in school. Inspectors agree that, at the lower end of the school, not everyone is well behaved, but by the time you leave the school you understand the importance of working and playing together in harmony. We noted how some of you in Year 6 are excellent role models for the younger pupils. Inspectors also acknowledge that there are a small number of bullying incidents but that the school is continuing to work at raising your awareness of bullying and satisfactorily resolve any incidents that arise.

By the end of Year 6, you are all doing better in English and mathematics than pupils in other schools. However, given your capabilities and what you can already do when you start in the Reception Year, we think you ought to be achieving even better. There are some years where your progress slows down and the work in books is not as good as it could be. We have asked your teachers to check how they plan your lessons and the activities to meet everyone's needs and to expect more of you. You can help by making sure you know and use your targets and look at the comments when your work is marked. Please try especially hard with your presentation in all your work.

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education, but to ensure you receive a good education we have asked your teachers to make sure that all of their teaching is as good as in the best lessons. We have asked those responsible for leading the school to check the work of the school and your progress more thoroughly.

We wish you every success in the future and know you will help your teachers, work hard and make sure you are always kind to each other, and be ready to listen in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector

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