

# Lambs Lane Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109830
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	356636
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rob Crompton

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Hyde
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Finn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Back Lane Reading RG7 1JB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01189 883820
<b>Fax number</b>	01189 887448
<b>Email address</b>	head@lambslane.wokingham.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons and observed nine teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and staff and talked with pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 69 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors explored the progress pupils are making in writing across the school.
- They investigated how effectively the school is tackling the gap between the achievement of boys and girls through Key Stage 2.
- Inspectors looked at how well pupils who receive outside support are building on their starting points.

## Information about the school

This average sized primary school serves the village of Spencers Wood on the outskirts of Reading. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although the number having a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Most of these pupils have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. There is additional provision for up to 10 pupils with physical disabilities who are fully integrated within mainstream classes. There are two Reception classes and one class in each subsequent year. The school has achieved Healthy School status, the Activemark, the Artsmark and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its pupils, a few of whom have significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school is rightly proud of its reputation as a place where every effort is made to help all pupils make the best of the opportunities provided. Excellent partnerships with a wide range of external agencies help to ensure that pupils facing challenging circumstances are extremely well supported. Pupils readily offer help to their classmates with physical disabilities, but they occasionally feel rather concerned about the sporadic volatile behaviour of the few pupils who find difficulty in coping with day-to-day school life. All adults are very skilled in managing such incidents, and ensure pupils are not at risk. Although the conduct of a few pupils influences other pupils' views about behaviour, the inspection found that most pupils behave well during lessons and around the school.

Across the school, pupils' skills in writing have lagged behind those in reading. Girls in the Early Years Foundation Stage have tended to do much better than boys. There is also a wide gap between the attainment of the more able pupils at Key Stage 1 in reading and in writing. Overall attainment by the end of Year 6 has been broadly average. Pupils' progress, although satisfactory, has been patchy. The school has worked hard to address these issues. The quality of teaching is now consistently good; pupils are now beginning to make good progress in lessons and enjoy learning. However, the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory rather than good as the current successful strategies are too recent and not sufficiently embedded to ensure they have a cumulative impact on raising pupils' achievement and attainment.

The leadership team, with strong support from the governing body, keeps the provision under continuous review. There is a common ambition that the school remains fully inclusive. Self-evaluation is rigorous and draws on the views of pupils, parents and carers, members of staff and outside consultants. Comprehensive tracking systems have been introduced recently so school leaders can quickly spot any anomalies in pupils' progress, and evaluate the impact of teaching methods and the wide-ranging network of support. The skilful and dedicated team of support staff are managed very effectively and contribute significantly to pupils' learning and well-being. Many of the school's strengths have been sustained since the last inspection. The previous issues for improvement have been addressed successfully. The dip in the school's overall effectiveness since the last inspection is being tackled with rigour and resolute determination, indicating a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Accelerate the progress that boys make in writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - providing further opportunities for writing in the outdoor area
  - sustaining the current emphasis on planning topics designed to engage and motivate boys.
- Narrow the gap between the attainment of the more able pupils in Key Stage 1 in reading and in writing by:
  - encouraging pupils, when writing, to use some of the words and phrases they come across in their reading
  - providing further prompts for the vocabulary they might use when writing.
- Accelerate pupils' progress through Key Stage 2 by:
  - embedding the good practice in teaching and learning that is evident in all year groups
  - using the information gained from evaluating the impact of the wide range of intervention strategies to pinpoint successful methods and promote them further.
- Help pupils to feel safer and less concerned by reassuring them that the occasional volatile behaviour of the few pupils with severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties poses no threat to their own safety.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils enjoy learning and are beginning to make good progress in lessons because the lively teaching engages them and the curriculum topics capture their interest. However, overall achievement is satisfactory. This is because, in recent years, the progress made by different groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, has been mostly satisfactory due to the inconsistent quality of teaching. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs due to their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, make good progress in overcoming their problems, enabling them, for the most part, to work alongside their classmates.

Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. By the end of Year 2, pupils generally read well, with good concentration. Pupils did particularly well this year in reading, with half reaching the higher levels. In contrast, although some pupils came close, none reached the higher levels in writing. The more able pupils in Key Stage 1 generally write neatly in joined script, but their written work does not typically include the sentence construction, punctuation and vocabulary they come across in their reading.

There is a wide variation in the attainment of pupils in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. The proportion reaching the higher levels is broadly average, indicating that the more able pupils generally fulfil their potential. Other pupils have generally made the expected progress from their starting points, but there have been some inconsistencies. Girls have tended to outperform boys. There are clear signs that all groups of pupils are now gaining ground, however. For example, after exploring the outdoor areas and recording words to describe what they heard, saw and touched, Year 3

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pupils proudly showed their poems. Boys were just as keen as girls. One boy's opening line was, 'Looking at the knotty gnarled stump, sitting there gloomily on its own'. Many boys and girls in Year 6 showed considerable skill in engaging the reader using emotive language and effective sentence construction. Writing as a widower reflecting on past times when playing the piano, one pupil wrote,

'My spirits slightly lift as the music warms my heart, remembering the magical moments we spent, many times playing melodious music. Within a flash, I feel your tender lips caress my cheek, as you have done many times before. Only this time it's only your spirit I feel'

Other pupils are not so competent, but they are making good efforts to improve.

Pupils acquire basic numeracy skills as they move through the school but assessments revealed they were not adept at using these to solve mathematical problems. A renewed focus on practical investigations is paying dividends and pupils are getting better at applying their skills in different contexts. For example, pupils in Year 1 made good headway in learning how to estimate the weight of objects by searching for items around the classroom that 'weighed the same as Wilbur the piglet'. Year 5 pupils showed good levels of mathematical understanding as they tested the validity of statements such as, 'Prime numbers are always odd' and, 'Triangle numbers are always divisible by 3'.

The school successfully achieves its aims to create 'a community which values and celebrates the individual'. Although a few pupils expressed some concerns about feeling safe, they are generally tolerant and mostly unfazed by the occasional impulsive behaviour of some pupils. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Their good awareness of health issues and the importance of exercise are reflected in the school's Healthy School status, the Activemark award and their keen participation in sporting activities. Older pupils take their leadership roles seriously, such as playground buddies and peer mediators. Pupils attend regularly, cooperate well during group work and develop good insights into the world of work through a 'work placement' scheme with local businesses. They acquire satisfactory basic skills. These factors provide a sound basis for their subsequent education.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Lively and challenging teaching and a curriculum that engages pupils are the main reasons why pupils are making better progress in lessons than before but still have some ground to cover. Teachers are highly skilled in managing behaviour. They swiftly gain pupils' attention and sustain their involvement by setting tasks which spark their curiosity. For example, after the teacher showed them a pendulum clock, pupils in Year 6 became absorbed as they investigated whether there was a pattern in the relationship between the starting angle of a pendulum and the number of subsequent swings it made. Teachers mark work well, pointing out what has been done well and identifying the next steps in written dialogue with pupils. This is particularly effective in helping pupils to improve their writing. There are good prompts for learning on display in all classrooms, including collections of useful vocabulary. In the most successful lessons, teachers elicit pupils' suggestions, for example about the adjectives they might use, and ensure these are to hand as pupils are writing. Occasionally, pupils are more hesitant when tackling writing tasks when this kind of support is not available. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress in lessons and in catch-up groups.

Staff increasingly root studies in meaningful contexts which bring learning to life. On their return from a residential trip, pupils received a simulated letter from a hotel near where they had stayed. It asked them to investigate a stream that had been contaminated and included samples of powdered chalk, triamite and magrite. Pupils of all abilities were

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thoroughly absorbed in the subsequent tasks and keen to show their findings. Further evidence of the way the curriculum is planned around pupils' interests was seen as pupils' work in Year 4 in English and mathematics was centred around pizzas. This involved learning about fractions, generating advertisements and writing descriptions. In Year 5, pupils developed their use of persuasive language as they debated whether the student in the story they were reading should be expelled. Work is adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, such as those who find learning more difficult and those who have limited mobility. The strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development made by work in art and music is reflected in the school's Artsmark award.

Support for pupils and their families is very extensive indeed with a very well-trained team of teaching assistants who work extremely well with class teachers to help pupils make the most of school life. Barriers to learning are identified swiftly and excellent attention is given to how to overcome them, both internally and through close partnerships with outside specialists. Additional funds to support physically disabled pupils are used highly effectively to provide extra staffing and bespoke resources. The school provides an extremely caring environment which especially benefits those pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders set a very clear direction for the school. They have established good procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. There is, rightly, a strong focus on embedding the current good practice in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment. Expectations are high and staff share a relentless determination to ensure all pupils do as well as they can. Any form of discrimination is tackled immediately. Concerted action has led to the increased participation of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, particularly those who had found it extremely difficult to cope at other schools. A good start has been made in narrowing the gap between the achievement of more able pupils in reading and writing and between boys and girls. This stalwart approach to promoting equal opportunities is recognised by the school's Inclusion Quality Mark. Staff have recently refined the way the impact of support strategies is analysed. This is providing information about which methods have the best success in accelerating pupils' progress. The school, rightly, is increasingly using this emerging evidence to provide a clearer picture and fine tune provision for individuals and groups of pupils.



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The school benefits from excellent partnerships with outside agencies, such as social services and family support groups. Staff collaborate frequently with local schools to share best practice. Links with local businesses enhance opportunities for pupils to engage with the community and learn about the world of work.

The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. Through a programme of visits focused on the school's priorities for improvement, members gain first-hand insights into how the school is performing. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and implemented rigorously. Policies are reviewed annually by groups of staff, and the governing body, parents, carers and pupils are canvassed for their views.

Community cohesion is promoted well, particularly at a local level where the school makes every effort to ease any tensions in the neighbourhood. The school's work with families plays a significant role in this regard. Pupils have good opportunities to explore cultural similarities and differences through their work in art and music, and through religious education lessons which include an introduction to philosophy and ethics.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children soon settle in to the Reception classes. This is due to the effective induction arrangements and the good links established with parents and carers. Adults establish warm relationships with the children and there is a good balance of activities which they direct and those which children initiate for themselves. Adult involvement in children's role-play activities, such as in the 'veterinary clinic' facilitate children's imaginative use of language.

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Staff take every opportunity to engage children in discussions in order to refine children's thinking and develop their speaking and listening skills. Together with the systematic teaching of letters and sounds, this enables children to make good progress in early reading and writing skills. Although girls usually reach the expected levels for their age, boys tend to lag behind. There are good opportunities for children to practise writing indoors. These are not so evident outdoors, however, and boys tend to gravitate to the physical activities such as climbing and riding toy vehicles. Staff have devised topics designed to appeal to boys, such as activities centred on the adventures of a cartoon hero and are, rightly, planning to extend these. Staff make regular observations of children's learning and keep a cumulative 'learning journey' portfolio for each child. Some of the assessments are descriptive rather than evaluative, however, which leads to some loss of continuity in learning.

The provision is well managed. Leadership is shared between the headteacher, deputy headteacher and a Reception teacher. They ensure that all the adults are deployed effectively, particularly in meeting the needs of children with limited mobility and those with special educational needs. They have a good awareness of the priorities for improvement.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The proportion of parents and carers who returned questionnaires was about average. Almost all were happy overall with their children's experience. The very large majority of parents and carers had positive views about how their children are kept safe, although a small minority were concerned about how behaviour is managed. Inspectors observed pupils during lessons and breaks, over lunch, in assemblies and around the school. They found that pupils behave well and that behaviour is managed skilfully by the staff. Staff training is up to date and risk assessments relating to individual pupils are carried out frequently. There was no pattern in the negative comments made by a few parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lambs Lane Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	51	28	41	5	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	35	51	33	48	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	41	31	45	10	14	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	35	38	55	6	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	31	45	34	49	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	35	38	55	7	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	45	34	49	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	32	33	48	6	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	38	38	55	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	20	34	49	16	23	5	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	30	37	54	9	13	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	28	41	35	51	5	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	39	36	52	3	4	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



14 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Lambs Lane Primary School, Reading, RG7 1JB**

You may remember that a team of inspectors visited recently to see how you are getting on. Thanks to all of you who explained what you were doing in lessons and talked to us about what goes on around the school. I'm sure you would like to know what we are saying in our report. The school is satisfactory, although we recognise that it is improving and there are plenty of good things about it. Most of you are trying hard and making better progress in lessons but this has not always been the case in recent years, which means you reach average standards.

Your teachers and the other adults work hard to help you enjoy learning and make good progress. You are extremely well cared for and those of you who find learning difficult are very well supported. Staff work very closely with people outside the school who provide specialist help when needed. Our discussion with the school council and your responses to our survey indicated that the occasional outbursts of a few pupils make some of you nervous. We found that a lot goes on in the background to ensure you are safe and we have suggested that the adults reassure you that you are in no real danger when these incidents occur. As well as this, we have suggested three things for the school to do now to improve:

- make sure the boys in Reception do as well as girls in writing
- help those of you in Years 1 and 2 who read very well to improve your writing skills
- speed up the progress those of you in Years 3 to 6 make in English and mathematics.

Your headteacher, the governing body and staff are always looking for ways to make the school better. You can all help by contributing your ideas about what helps you learn. Thank you again and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton  
Lead inspector

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