

Lawn Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique reference number | 126240 |
| Local authority | Swindon |
| Inspection number | 381195 |
| Inspection dates | 4–5 July 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Hazel Callaghan |

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 | 416 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Janet Busby |
| Headteacher | Chris Davis |
| Date of previous school inspection | February 2007 |
| School address | Cleeve Lawn Swindon SN3 1LE |
| Telephone number | 01793 522626 |
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| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection date(s) | 4–5 July 2012 |
| Inspection number | 3381195 |



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Introduction

Inspection team

Hazel Callaghan

Additional inspector

Michael Bartleman

Additional inspector

Christopher Crouch

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 26 lessons taught by 14 teachers. They held meetings with staff pupils and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, they observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentations including that related to safeguarding, evidence of many of the school's activities, the school development plan and the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress. Inspectors scrutinised the questionnaires completed by staff and pupils along with the 191 parental questionnaires received.

Information about the school

Lawn Primary is larger than most primary schools. The vast majority of its pupils come from White British backgrounds. The backgrounds of pupils from minority ethnic groups are varied, but each group is small. Very few have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also below average. The school received an interim assessment by Ofsted in July 2010 which judged the school's good performance to have been sustained and so its next full inspection was deferred until now. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Over the last two years the school has received the Artsmark Gold Award, Healthy Eating Plus Award and holds the Dyslexia Friendly School Status. The school runs a breakfast club each morning. A privately-run pre-school is situated in the school grounds and privately-managed clubs are held after school. Neither were part of this inspection and their reports can be found on the Ofsted website.

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 | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 1 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key findings

- This is a good school that promotes pupils’ academic and personal development well. Parents and carers agree and many made positive comments about the quality of teaching, the care and support pupils receive and the school’s good leadership. It is not yet an outstanding school because, although pupils of all abilities and backgrounds now make good progress and attainment rose sharply in 2012, attainment and progress have not been consistently above average over time.
- Teaching is good. Children make a good start in the Reception year and this good achievement continues through the school. Teachers are skilled in making their lessons interesting and pupils thoroughly enjoy their activities which promote good levels of independence and challenge their thinking. Teachers assess pupils’ attainment accurately and generally match activities to their learning needs well.
- Attainment in English and mathematics has varied in recent years between average and above average. Underachievement, evident previously in some year groups, has been addressed and gaps in pupils’ learning are closing successfully because all abilities achieve well. Boys and girls make better progress than their peers nationally, but girls’ achievement is stronger than that of the boys’ in reading and writing particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- Behaviour is excellent. Pupils demonstrate high levels of concentration, perseverance and eagerness to learn. They show care for one another and respect for each other’s views. They display a mature awareness of potential dangers around them and make an excellent contribution to the school’s safe and positive learning environment.
- Staff and governors share the headteacher’s strength of purpose in moving the school forward, with the result that there has been significant and concerted focus on improving teaching and on managing the school’s performance which can be seen in rising attainment. The senior team have played a significant part in this process. The curriculum has been developed effectively and promotes pupils’ enjoyment of learning and their strong spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable pupils to reach above average attainment in English and mathematics consistently over time by:
 - ensuring boys make similar strong progress to the girls in reading and writing, especially in Years 1 and 2
 - developing an even sharper focus to the matching of activities to what pupils know and can do so their learning accelerates further
 - ensuring that the marking policy is consistently applied so all pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve, and by giving pupils time to respond to the teachers' comments.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start in the Reception classes with a range of knowledge and skills that is similar to that expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of their learning to usually reach above average attainment because they are encouraged to experiment and explore in a stimulating learning environment. This good progress continues throughout the school for boys and girls, for those disabled or with special needs, and those from minority ethnic groups. In the past progress had been uneven through the school; strong in some classes, but not in all. After several years of high attainment, attainment fell to broadly average in 2010. However, through the concerted and successful focus on improving the quality of teaching, underachievement has been addressed. Gaps in attainment have been closed, particularly for those eligible for free school meals, and attainment has risen once more.

Lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work show that pupils in the current Year 2 are attaining above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys and girls are both achieving well, but the boys' rates of progress are not quite as high as that of the girls in the school particularly in Years 1 and 2. Boys' progress, however, is on track to be better than all pupils nationally. Good progress is evident in English, reading and writing, and mathematics through Key Stage 2. As in Year 2, pupils in Year 6 are currently attaining above expected levels in reading. This is the result of a focus on developing teachers' expertise in teaching reading which has increased pupils' interest and motivation to read and improved their inferential reading skills. Pupils through the school enjoy reading. Some, however, are not confident in using their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) to spell or to read because of inconsistent teaching of phonics in the past.

Pupils respond well to challenging activities, they work well collaboratively in pairs and in groups and independently. They want to do well and are proud of their successes. Parents and pupils agree with the inspection findings that pupils are making good progress. One parent's comments were typical of many, 'I strongly believe Lawn School provides the perfect balance of care, learning, challenges and

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achievement to enable my child to reach his potential.'

Quality of teaching

Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school tracking data show teaching is now good throughout the school. Good teaching was evident in the teachers' careful and detailed planning and in the range of activities that motivated pupils to learn. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils are a marked feature and pupils generally show high levels of concentration and involvement. Teachers regularly praise pupils' contributions, which produces confident and resilient learners. Lessons are fast paced, questioning effectively probes pupils' understanding, and pupils usefully and routinely evaluate their own and each other's work.

Teachers provide good levels of challenge for pupils of all abilities so they learn to use their mathematical and language skills effectively. In a mathematics lesson for the more-able pupils in Year 3, for example, pupils were challenged to order stock for the class ready for next term. While working within a set budget and taking account of the special offers available, they were expected to decide how to get the best value in their purchases. In the vast majority of lessons, teachers' effective use of assessment ensures that activities build on pupils' prior learning, but in a few lessons the range of challenges was not sufficiently well matched to pupils' different levels of ability resulting in only satisfactory progress. Where challenge is very successfully matched to pupils' capabilities and linked to their individual targets, learning is outstanding, as was seen in an English lesson in Year 4. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils of all abilities. Their experience and expertise can be seen at its best when supporting disabled pupils and those with special needs so they make good progress. Teachers' marking is often evaluative and sets pupils' next steps so the pupils understand how to improve. Sometimes, however, opportunities to explain these next steps are missed and a small number of pupils said they were not sure how well they were doing. In many classes, time is given to the pupils to read the teachers' marking so they can make improvements, but this is not always the case and opportunities to build on the quality of their work are missed.

Effective links are made between subjects and provide regular opportunities for pupils to use and consolidate their English and mathematical skills and promote the use of information and communication technology (ICT) skills well. This was seen effectively demonstrated in a Year 2 class where pupils were recording what they had learnt about The Fire Of London and in a Year 3 class developing leaflets about the local area, having researched it on the internet. The curriculum and the wealth of additional activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral school and cultural development extremely well.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

The vast majority of pupils behave extremely well in their lessons and going about the school. Pupils are typically friendly and polite. They show care for one another as can be seen in their many activities to voluntarily raise money for an operation for a disabled boy in the school. They enjoy their activities and want to do well. They show extremely good levels of concentration and attention in lessons and respect for each other's work and effort. They make an excellent contribution to their own learning and lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils say behaviour is good and bullying of any kind is rare, especially any physical, emotional or cyber bullying. Any name calling is to do with minor arguments or due to frustration and pupils say any problems are quickly sorted out by the staff. Parents and carers believe that behaviour is at least good and few had any concerns. As one parent commented, 'On the rare occasions an incident occurred which upset my child or others, I felt the school has dealt with it quickly and efficiently.' Scrutiny of behavioural records and discussions show that behaviour is exemplary over time too.

Pupils say they feel very safe at school. They identify possible hazards and make an exceptional contribution to a safe, positive learning environment. The school council, for example, has made suggestions about how play times can be improved and monitors the impact effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of using the internet safely and have a good awareness of possible dangers around them, spotting an issue about the perimeter fence, for example, which has now been addressed. Attendance is above the national average. Persistent absence is rare.

Leadership and management

The determination and strong leadership of the headteacher and his senior team have been instrumental in moving the school forward. School evaluation is accurate and leads effectively to the priorities for development. Staff at all levels are ambitious for the school and work well together as a cohesive team. Thorough systems of performance management, along with good levels of support and professional training, have resulted in teachers' good understanding of how to promote pupils' effective learning. This has focused particularly successfully on developing teachers' accurate assessment of pupils' work and in establishing high expectations for pupils' progress. Teaching has improved and both attainment and achievement have increased, showing the school's capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum is well organised and covers all subjects appropriately. Pupils say they enjoy their topics and recalled with pleasure many of their recent activities, especially the Year 6 residential trip. Art and music are particular strengths of the curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to work with pupils of other age groups and from other schools, which develops their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development extremely effectively. Performing alongside a choir from a local special school which pupils supported and a visit to a school in Wales were just two examples. Staff ensure there is no discrimination and are well focused on ensuring all pupils have the best opportunities to achieve.

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Safeguarding procedures are robust, often excellent and fully meet requirements. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their child was safe and many commented on the levels of care provided by staff for their child. As one wrote, 'I have never had any issues or concerns regarding my children because the quality of teaching is good and levels of care are outstanding.' Parents and carers also agree with inspectors that leadership and management are good.

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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 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 to 31 December 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. |
| Floor standards | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| 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.

6 July 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Lawn Primary School, Swindon SN3 1LE

I am writing to tell you the results of our visit to your school recently. First we would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and answering our questions. You and your families are rightly proud of your school and we agree it is a good school.

Here are some of the things we found out about you and your school.

- You all make good progress to reach levels that are overall better than most pupils in other schools in English and mathematics. You use your language skills and mathematics well to help your learning in other subjects and we thought your art work was beautiful.
- You want to do well and you try hard. We could see that most of you really enjoy your work, and relish the challenges that the teachers give you.
- You behave extremely well. You concentrate in class and show care for one another. You feel very safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves and others safe.
- You are taught well and all your teachers are skilled at helping you to make good progress in your learning.
- The school is led well by your headteacher and the governors and all the staff work really hard to make your school a successful and happy community.

Even though Lawn Primary is a good school, there a few things we have asked your headteacher and staff to do so it can improve further.

- To help you consistently reach good levels in your English and mathematics: teachers should: ensure your activities are just at the right level to challenge your thinking; make comments in your books that always help you to understand how well you are doing and how to improve, giving you time to make the improvements they suggest; help boys to make the same good progress in reading and writing as girls, especially in Years 1 and 2.

Thank you again for making our visit to your school so interesting. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Hazel Callaghan
Lead inspector

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