

Lighthorne Heath Primary School

Stratford Road, Lighthorne Heath, Leamington Spa, CV33 9TW

Inspection dates 13–14 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Federation (working very closely in partnership) with an outstanding school has transformed the education of pupils at Lighthorne Heath. Under the inspirational leadership of the overall (executive) headteacher, pupils are making increasingly rapid progress.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen significantly since federation, and are above average.
- Pupils now achieve well because they are taught well and teachers provide interesting and exciting challenges.
- The school has an effective system for checking the progress made by every pupil.
- Pupils appreciate the strong sense of belonging they experience within the school family.
- Pupils behave well and clearly understand how to keep themselves safe.
- Leaders, managers and governors at all levels focus strongly on ensuring that their actions always improve pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to strengthen their learning by looking back over and developing the work they have done, and do not use questioning to develop challenges for pupils.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, some written observations of children describe activities rather than achievements, and do not always provide information about what the next steps in learning need to be.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all three classes during six lessons, all of which were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspector looked at pupils' work, heard a sample of pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and held discussions with pupils about many aspects of school life.
- Meetings were held with the executive and associate headteachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, and senior members of staff.
- The inspector took account of the five responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and supplemented this information with a scrutiny of surveys of parents' opinion organised by the school.
- He observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documents, including data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring information, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents related to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mike Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lighthorne Heath is very small compared to the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is about twice the national average.
- During the autumn term 2010, the school became federated with Sydenham Primary School in Leamington Spa. This federation followed a period of considerable uncertainty during which the continuity of teaching and learning in some classes, and the management of the school, were adversely affected by staff absence. An executive headteacher has responsibility for both schools and is supported by an associate headteacher in each school. The federated schools share a governing body.
- The executive headteacher is a National Leader of Education and is also seconded on a part-time basis to the local authority to support the development of other schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school meets the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The adjacent Lighthorne Heath Children's Centre is independent of the school and is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop consistently outstanding features of teaching in all lessons by ensuring that:
 - teachers fine-tune their planning to ensure regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on and consolidate their learning
 - all teachers regularly use carefully planned questions in order to raise the level of challenge for pupils
 - practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage are consistent in recording evaluative assessments of the learning observed and in setting out the next steps that children need to achieve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment varies from year to year because the performance of each individual can have a disproportionate impact where year groups are very small.
- On entry, attainment is typically below what is expected nationally of three-year-olds.
- Children make good progress in all areas of learning in the Nursery and Reception class. They are taught well and receive good levels of individual attention from skilled practitioners who understand the ways in which young children learn best.
- By the time children move from Reception to Year 1 their attainment is, typically, close to that expected at this age.
- In Years 1 to 6, progress continues to be good in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The positive impact of the teaching of phonics (the sounds represented by letters) in the Reception Year is evident in the skills displayed by some of the least able Year 1 pupils whose reading was tested during the inspection. These pupils have a secure knowledge of basic sounds and blends.
- The work provided for pupils in the class for Years 4 to 6 is generally demanding and requires pupils to think about their own learning. The high proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in this class is particularly well supported.
- Throughout the school, the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is constantly scrutinised. Teachers use this information well to adjust their planning and to carefully tailor additional support. Teaching assistants are good at providing clear explanations to ensure that the pupils are able to participate fully. As a result of the actions taken, these pupils make at least good progress.
- Teachers are good at capturing and holding pupils' interest through carefully structured activities. When asked what they liked best about the school, most of the pupils interviewed chose either specific subjects or commented on the impact of teachers on their learning.
- Sometimes, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to reflect on, and consolidate, what they have learned, either at the end of lessons or through periodic discussions during the course of lessons.
- The school makes good use of pupil premium funding to ensure that those eligible have the same full access to learning opportunities as all other pupils. Performance data show that these pupils make equally good rates of progress as all other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has significantly improved through the executive headteacher's astute deployment of staff from the federated partner school. Three of the four teachers, including the associate headteacher, were formerly members of staff at Sydenham Primary.
- The school also benefits greatly from the additional expertise provided by the federated partner school for teaching disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and, through the school counsellor, for individual pupils and their families.

- Teachers are generally skilled at providing their pupils with work that is well matched to learning needs and aptitudes and provides good levels of challenge.
- The teaching of phonics is outstanding. It is crisply paced, with short, sharply focused activities that are carefully layered to develop challenge while consolidating prior learning. Teaching groups are small, so all pupils are extremely well supported.
- Teachers are skilled in making good use of on-going assessments through questioning, and adjust their teaching in light of what they observe pupils to be learning.
- In some instances, teachers too readily accept pupils' answers and miss opportunities to develop learning to a higher level through extra questions.
- At the beginning of lessons, teachers are good at ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to achieve.
- In English, the school ensures that pupils have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to achieve the next level in their learning. This occurs through the use of easily accessible 'child-friendly' language in the targets set out for pupils. A similar system has been developed in mathematics and is beginning to be implemented.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, some of the written assessments that form part of the record of children's achievements lack precision. In all other respects, the children's 'learning journals' provide a clear picture of the good progress made.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. In closely supervised situations, such as in whole-school assembly, behaviour is impeccable.
- Staff, pupils and their parents feel that behaviour in the school has improved markedly over the past two years and is good. Data about behaviour and exclusions support these views. For example, there has been a marked reduction in fixed-term exclusions from 22 in 2009–10 to just five in 2010–11. These five exclusions related to two pupils.
- A clear contribution to this improvement is the good partnership that is rapidly developing between school and parents. This is based on increased levels of confidence in and respect for the school within the local community.
- Pupils' responses in lessons show that they make generally good gains in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Their learning behaviours are good. They are attentive, know that they are at school to learn, and sustain concentration well.
- Pupils are keenly aware of the importance of learning. A small group of pupils have been recruited as 'learning detectives'. They observe lessons both in this school and in their federated partner school and then feed back their findings to the pupils observed.
- Pupils generally show courtesy towards each other, respect one another and adults, and take a pride in their school.
- Pupils acknowledge that there are occasional disputes between pupils but feel that there is little bullying of any sort. They have a clear understanding of cyber-bullying.
- Very occasionally, a few pupils use homophobic or racist language, but in almost all

instances they have little understanding of its implications. The school is quick to act in these circumstances.

- Attendance rates have risen over the past few years and are now above average. Almost all pupils are punctual.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The impact of federation has been significant. The local authority provided good support immediately prior to federation by enabling staff changes. Since then, it has provided light touch support because the executive headteacher also works for the local authority.
- The headteacher's expertise and excellent track-record of school improvement has been the catalyst for the transformation that has occurred. The associate headteacher leads by example and plays an important part in ensuring that actions are effectively implemented.
- Standards are rising rapidly because of the improvements made in teaching. All staff have ready access to a wide range of high-quality opportunities for professional development, shared with their colleagues at the partner school.
- Parents are greatly appreciative of the transformation since federation and recognise the good action taken by the school to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination. Typical of their comments is: 'I am very happy with the huge improvements to the school over the past two years. It now offers many more opportunities for my child. There is strong leadership, and teaching has improved greatly. This is a fantastic little school.'
- The school's learning improvement plan sets out an extremely clear agenda for the further developments needed. This is underpinned by well-focused individual action plans produced by leaders at all levels.
- Monitoring and evaluation is highly effective and underpins the robust performance management of all staff.
- There is a very clear vision to which parents and staff fully subscribe. This is shared effectively through, for example, weekly newsletters.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A clear moral code permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils' achievements as 'learning heroes' are celebrated weekly. Opportunities for cultural development feature regularly.
- The curriculum provides pupils with many first-hand learning experiences. It offers an outstanding range of activities, including residential visits, to enrich pupils' learning. It is also carefully tailored to meet individual needs. Very specific interventions, such as one-to-one tuition, are regularly implemented to ensure that pupils make at least good progress.
- As a result of well-focused teaching, leaders have ensured that pupils are making excellent gains in their skills and knowledge in phonics. This means that pupils are able to use their reading skills to good effect across the curriculum.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is well informed
 - is fully involved in the school's well-focused and accurate self-evaluation

- ensures that the budget is carefully managed
 - ensures that safeguarding meets requirements
 - is effective in ensuring that the school's rapid upward trajectory is sustained.
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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	125530
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	402787

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Naylor
Headteacher	Juliette Westwood
Date of previous school inspection	22 June 2010
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