

# Leen Mills Primary School

Leen Mills Lane, Vaughan Estate, Nottingham, NG15 8BZ

## Inspection dates

18–19 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Most pupils, including children in the Reception class, make good progress and learn well across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics.
- The very large majority of pupils in Year 6 achieved well at the end of the last academic year; an improvement on previous years. Pupils identified as slipping behind were given additional support to ensure they met expected levels.
- Teaching and learning are almost always good. Pupils acquire a good knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics), which they apply well to their reading and writing. The best lessons are adapted very effectively for the full range of learners in the class.
- Pupils are happy. They enjoy being part of an active school community. Relationships are strong. Pupils are kept safe and they behave well.
- There is effective additional support available for those who struggle to learn as part of a large group. Attendance is in line with other schools nationally.
- The leadership team is supported very well by an effective governing body which ensures there is continual school improvement. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Effective solutions are found to improve pupil progress and narrow the gap in the achievement of different groups of children and individuals.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The best teaching practice is not shared widely enough or monitored sufficiently to ensure consistently high quality teaching in every class.
- Staff are held to account to ensure pupils who are underperforming improve, but are not always held to account for the progress of all pupils in their class.
- Performance management is securely in place for teaching staff but not for all staff employed by the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons, to the playgrounds, Breakfast Club and Nurture Group.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors and school staff, including senior leaders and classroom support staff. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority and a small number of parents as they dropped their children off at school.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own data on pupils’ progress in the last academic year, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding pupils and the performance management of staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) received during the time of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Jane Melbourne, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Lin Bartlett

Additional inspector

Kerin Jones

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The number of pupils has increased since the last inspection; the school is larger than the average-size primary school.
- From this term, there is only one entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage each year and no Nursery. The children now enter the Reception class in September.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is slightly below the national average, but rising.
- A smaller proportion of pupils than is typical are identified as disabled or with special educational needs and are supported through school action or school action plus. There are no pupils currently who are supported with a statement of special educational need. The school supports 19 pupils through the Nurture Group.
- There are fewer than average pupils from minority ethnic groups. A very small number are at an early stage of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club from 7.30am each morning.
- There have been no other significant changes since the last inspection.

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

- Through a more robust system of performance management, leaders and managers should
  - hold teachers more closely to account for the progress of each individual pupil in their class
  - ensure the formal system of appraisal is used for all school staff
  - ensure that systems for handling individual pupil progress data are manageable and become embedded in every teachers work.
- Ensure that pupils' progress is always good or better in every single lesson by increasing the sharing of best practice in teaching across the school and which includes:
  - continually assessing pupils' learning and progress throughout the lesson
  - providing opportunities for pupils to work independently and to be appropriately challenged through carefully chosen activities, clear instructions and skilled questioning
  - ensuring pupils are always clear about the levels they are working at, with sufficient guidance and time given to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- School data shows that standards at the end of Year 6 rose in 2012 after a disappointing set of results in 2011. The school was successful in reducing the attainment gap of pupils within the cohort by swift identification of their needs and well-chosen intervention, support and booster classes.
- The very large majority of pupils in Year 6 attained the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. Although there were rises in the number of pupils gaining the higher levels in all subjects, the school correctly recognises that too few pupils attained the higher levels in writing, and this is now identified as a whole-school focus. The school has strengthened the programme of teaching phonics in Key Stage 2 to help address this.
- There is a consistent trend of high attainment at the end of Year 2. Termly assessment and close monitoring ensures that target pupils who require additional support are identified and catch-up sessions are put in place for both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Consequently, the large majority of Key Stage 1 pupils achieve above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make expected or better than expected progress from slightly lower than typical starting points, so that, by the time they leave the Reception Class, they are mostly in line or above local or national expectations.
- Although making generally good progress overall, and frequently achieving slightly better than similar pupils nationally, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make slightly less progress than the high levels achieved by other pupils within the school.
- It is too early to assess the academic progress of pupils in the Nurture Group, although the pupils attending the lunchtime group made significant progress in their social and emotional development. They are noticeably more settled in class and their behaviour improved in the playground.
- The school identified that pupil progress often slows in Years 3 and 4. The restructuring of classes around the time of the last inspection to provide a discrete Year 3 class allows a smoother transition of younger and less mature pupils from Key Stage 1 into Key Stage 2. School assessment data shows that pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 usually make similarly good levels of progress as pupils in other year groups.
- Boys of middle ability still do less well than their girl counterparts. Last year, the school piloted an initiative to promote the achievement and progress of those pupils in Years 4 and 5 considered to be at greatest risk of underachievement. An analysis at the end of the programme demonstrates significant rises in the achievement and progress of this group of pupils. The school is now set to roll this programme out more widely across the school as part of their overall initiatives for 'closing the achievement gap'.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time promotes the good progress and outcomes for pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teaching in the very large majority of lessons is good. Only a very small minority of

teaching in lessons requires improvement or is inadequate.

- Pupils benefit in particular from high quality teaching provided by specialists in music, dance and sport. Pupils' enjoyment of these lessons is very high.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) builds well on what pupils already know and can do. Sessions are arranged to ensure pupils at a similar stage in their learning are grouped together. Teaching is therefore appropriately tailored to their learning needs.
- Some teachers are highly skilled in their questioning techniques to deepen pupils' knowledge and to stimulate independent thinking. These teachers also typically check on pupils' progress at regular intervals throughout the lesson.
- The majority of teachers, including newly qualified teachers, demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge. They choose many outdoor experiences and trips to enliven learning.
- Lessons are almost always well-planned and structured to provide variety and retain pupils' interest. They are generally adapted well to account for the full range of learners' needs in the class. Just occasionally, pupils do not get down to independent learning quickly enough or do not find the work set hard enough. The best lessons make the learning intention very clear and precise instructions are provided for the task set.
- The new marking policy, when applied consistently, ensures that pupils know how they need to improve. However, pupils are not always given the chance to correct their work before moving on.
- Support staff are deployed very effectively to support pupils and to make a contribution to their learning and progress. They know pupils well and have a good understanding of their needs. Communication between teachers and support staff is excellent. They are routinely included in lesson preparation and planning, therefore understanding the learning objectives and how the activities will be resourced. Due to thorough training and professional development, they are well skilled and able to take an active part in teaching groups of pupils as needed. For example, they are used well at the lower end of the school to plan and lead small group activities and sessions of phonics and further up the school to run some booster sessions. There is good practice in Key Stage 1 where targets set for support staff are appraised regularly, which helps teaching strategies to be constantly evaluated in terms of their impact on improving pupil progress.
- The quality of teaching has improved in the Early Years Foundation Stage with the greater use of the outdoor area. This has impacted on the range of activities offered and the greater appeal of activities to children who are naturally more active. Children sensibly use both indoor and outdoor spaces fluidly.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils told the inspection team that behaviour around the school and in classes is typically good. Parents responding to the online questionnaire agree. As a result of good quality staff training and a consistently applied behaviour policy which is understood by all, sanctions are rare and exclusions are few. Behaviour was consistently good throughout the inspection, including for those pupils who find it more difficult to always behave well.
- The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy and effective systems in place for monitoring this formally and informally. Committed premises staff and vigilance from all

who work with the pupils ensures they are kept safe at work and at play. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, for example when cycling or walking to and from school.

- Pupils are kind to each other and there are very few instances of bullying. Any isolated incidents are dealt with effectively. Older pupils support younger pupils well. Strong relationships are evident across the school.
- Attendance has been rising due to effective whole school initiatives for promoting the importance of regular attendance. School procedures for monitoring attendance are robust.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have focused well on addressing the points for improvement from the previous inspection. These have almost universally been tackled successfully but a few continue to be worked upon. However, the school has not stood still. It has taken on some well-chosen and effective initiatives to break the cycle of underachievement and to raise attainment for the minority of previously under-performing pupils.
- Key stage leaders are highly competent and have a strong handle on their own particular phases. Leaders monitor the quality of pupils' work and teachers' marking well, identifying where there remain inconsistencies. They have a strong handle on the achievement and progress of pupils within their relevant year groups. They have less time available to share their own classroom practice and to monitor others' teaching.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed and the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in this phase is accurate. Priorities for action are sensible and take account of the new statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and guidance. Since the last inspection, the quality of the outdoor learning environment has improved and the use of it has increased. The governing body is not yet monitoring this area as meticulously as it does in other areas, but it is planning for this as part of its impending re-constitution.
- The school has worked very hard to improve their systems for gathering data, with particular focus on analysing data for different groups of pupils, including those who are considered to be the most vulnerable. There is now a necessity to ensure this systematic gathering of data is used fully by all staff, and to embed the systems and ensure that data is clear and comprehensible, serving as a helpful tool to teaching. Key stage leaders have already begun to use data well, but this is not shared quickly enough with all staff or talked about more widely to ensure there is a culture in school of understanding trends across key stages and not just what goes on in individual classes.
- At individual class level, teachers are regularly using the data to look at the progress of individuals or groups of pupils, but are not consistently looking at the class as a whole. This is, in part, due to the way in which performance management is currently focused on staff being accountable for particular groups, rather than for the whole class making the expected levels of progress.
- The curriculum is well thought out and has many strengths. Pupils engage well with the curriculum as subjects are made relevant to them and take account of their interests where possible. This is also particularly so in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a strong emphasis on developing basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities which are well supported; for example, the choir, boys' singing group and gardening club. Enrichment activities are also popular, such as the annual Year 6 residential trip in Eyam, which helps

to promote pupils' confidence and team-building.

- Staff have a good understanding of each year's intake. There is a thorough identification of the varying and bespoke needs of the pupils, including those who face some barriers to learning. The pupil premium funding has been used wisely to provide interventions and support for those pupils for whom the funding is intended. The impact of this is to be seen in raising levels of punctuality, attendance, behaviour and achievement for the most vulnerable pupils in the school. The funding also ensures the provision and retention of high quality support staff, which ensures that groups in and out of classrooms are kept to a manageable size to the obvious benefit of pupils. Funding has also provided specialist training, for example for staff to work with pupils in the Nurture Group.
  - All statutory requirements related to safeguarding are met.
  - This school has received significant levels of support in the past from the local authority. They have had less direct involvement in the past two years in recognition of stronger teaching and strengthening of the senior leadership team.
  - **The governance of the school: is highly effective because**
    - there is an excellent skill set on the governing body which is audited and utilised to best effect. Expertise is therefore apportioned to the most appropriate committee
    - they are pro-active in challenging the school's attainment data and checking the impact of interventions and initiatives in terms of pupil progress
    - they are very aware of their roles and responsibilities and take external advice on the work of the headteacher, closely aligning this to whole-school objectives and performance management
    - they ensure that staff resources are allocated to the greatest areas of need, so that there are equal opportunities for all pupils. They plan to provide more time for the co-ordination of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
    - they rigorously check the health and safety arrangements for the site and for the pupils and staff
    - they work hard to raise the profile of governors with parents and other stakeholders and promote the school within the wider community.
    - they are closely involved in the self-evaluation of the school
    - governors, and in particular the Chair of the Governing Body, provides good levels of support for the senior leadership team; school issues are therefore dealt with swiftly and effectively.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122589
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	395575

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

<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>	351
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roger Kahler
<b>Headteacher</b>	John White
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2009
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