

# Loatlands Primary School

Harrington Road, Desborough, Kettering, NN14 2NJ

## Inspection dates

25–26 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- The good quality of education in the Nursery and Reception classes has been maintained since the previous inspection. Children make good progress because the experience and expertise of the leader ensure teaching is invariably good.
- Most pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics as they move through the school. They also make good progress in writing, although standards are not quite as high.
- Good teaching is ensuring that standards in literacy and numeracy are rising. Skilled support staff ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around school, and pupils feel safe. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance.
- Leadership and management are good. The staff are working well as a team, inspired by the partnership between the new headteacher and deputy headteacher. Both check thoroughly on the performance of staff and have eliminated most weaknesses in teaching.
- The governors have much expertise and ask the senior leaders increasingly searching questions about the pace and level of improvement. This is enhancing the school's good capacity to go on improving.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Boys are not doing as well in writing as they are in reading and mathematics. From entry to the Nursery to Year 6, teachers are missing opportunities to promote writing skills in literacy sessions and other subjects.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, planning for outdoor learning is not always detailed enough to make the best use of the space.
- Subject leaders are only just beginning to check the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which two were joint observations involving the headteacher. Inspectors also observed the headteacher reporting back to teachers on the quality of learning and pupils' achievement in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the pupil council and a group of Key Stage 2 pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and the headteacher and other leaders.
- A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority about the support and advice provided for the school.
- There were only 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. The inspectors sought the views of parents and carers as they arrived at school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents including: the school's own data on pupils' recent and current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and safeguarding records.

## Inspection team

Joseph Peacock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Onyon

Additional Inspector

Teresa Kiely

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school, and almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- There is a Nursery, attended by children from a wide area on a part-time basis, and currently one single-age class in each year group from Reception to Year 6. Plans are in place to increase the size of the school because of a rising demand for places locally, and eventually there will be two classes in each year group.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A new headteacher and deputy headteacher started in September 2012.

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

- Develop more outstanding teaching and make sure that boys achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics, by:
  - making consistently good use of time in lessons, particularly so that pupils have more opportunities to write for longer in literacy sessions
  - adding opportunities for them to write more often when they are learning in all the other subjects they study
  - encouraging children in the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly boys, to practise early writing skills in activities that they choose themselves
  - developing the role of subject leaders in checking the quality of teaching and how well literacy skills are being developed in their subjects.
- In Nursery and Reception, make sure that the planned outdoor activities help children to practise, consolidate and learn the skills being taught in indoor activities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- When they join the Nursery, children's skills and understanding are typically below the levels expected nationally for their age, particularly their communication skills. A warm welcome and good teaching make sure children settle quickly and most make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Activities such as role play in the railway station area in the Nursery, and in the café in the park in Reception, promote speaking skills well. Outdoor learning is enjoyable, with independent activities and equipment such as wheeled toys to share. All children benefit from daily sessions to learn letters and their sounds (phonics). However, few of the indoor and outdoor activities that children choose for themselves develop their writing. Outdoor activities are not planned in as much detail as those indoors, and links between them are not always clear enough to encourage children to move freely between the two.
- Older pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2. This is because of good teaching, pupils' positive attitudes to learning, and good support from teaching assistants.
- By Year 6, standards are well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. Relatively few boys attain above the levels expected for their age throughout the school. Opportunities are often missed for pupils to write as part of their work in different subjects, to practise and build up their skills. In some literacy sessions, not enough time is set aside for pupils to write, and so much of the writing is shorter than normally seen for this age group.
- In mathematics, teachers display good subject knowledge and are ably supported by skilled teaching assistants. This ensures that standards are more consistently above average, with boys and girls doing as well as one another.
- There is a strong emphasis on teaching reading skills throughout the school. Pupils use their phonics skills in Key Stage 1 to work out and read longer, more difficult words. Through research when using computers, older pupils successfully develop their reading skills.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide one-to-one support for eligible pupils in lessons, and also for a parent liaison member of staff to support family learning. As a result, almost all of these pupils make good progress. For some, it improves rapidly in Year 6.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Decisive action to improve ineffective teaching by the new headteacher and governing body has made sure that teaching and learning are now good in most lessons. Consequently, pupils achieve well and are prepared well for the next phase in their education.
- The support provided by skilled and conscientious learning support assistants helps all groups of pupils to succeed. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported closely in lessons so they can successfully tackle new learning. In Year 6, more-able pupils were taught algebra in a highly effective group session out of the class with a teaching assistant.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, parent volunteers regularly help to guide children as they learn. Many willingly helped to supervise the Nursery children on their learning walk to nearby

woods, for example.

- Teachers assess pupils' ongoing progress accurately, and most use the resulting information well to plan relevant tasks for pupils of different abilities. Marking is thorough and detailed, and the comments show pupils clearly how to improve their work.
- In a very few lessons, teaching and learning require improvement. The lesson introductions to the whole class are too long, so some pupils find it hard to maintain their concentration and the amount of time for pupils to complete tasks such as writing is reduced.
- Pupils' basic skills are usually developed well through planned links between work in different subjects. In a Year 5 science lesson, for example, pupils used portable computers to research the dangers of tobacco to make a poster. Good links were made with other subjects such as history and geography, although opportunities were missed to consolidate their writing skills.
- Good support for the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language enables them to learn English quickly and be fully involved in lessons.
- Staff provide a good range of after-school clubs in sport, dance and music that contribute well to pupils' achievement and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Football, cheerleading and dance are particular favourites and are well supported.

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

- Pupils typically behave well around school, showing kindness and consideration for one another and respect for adults. In the few lessons where learning required improvement, some pupils lost their concentration but did not interfere with the learning of others.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire agree that behaviour is good.
- There have been no permanent or fixed-term exclusions since the new headteacher arrived. Pupils are polite and have positive attitudes towards school. Behaviour is particularly good in assemblies. Everyone, including parents, thoroughly enjoyed the assembly presented by children in Reception.
- Pupils of all ages have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as making racist comments and name-calling. All those spoken to said that bullying in any form rarely happens, although a small number said that they have experienced name-calling.
- Behaviour is consistently well managed and any cases of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively. Pupils are confident that the staff will look after them if they have any concerns. Parents spoken to during the inspection agreed that the school deals effectively with behaviour and bullying.
- Attendance is above average and this has been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils are punctual each day, showing how keen they are to come to school.

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

- The astute and energetic new headteacher has accurately identified the aspects of staff

performance that needed to be improved, and has introduced new and effective management structures to bring about improvement.

- Teachers with leadership roles are increasingly involved in helping to evaluate the quality of work in pupils' books, teachers' planning and how much progress pupils are making. This has highlighted the issue over boys' performance in writing.
- Subject leaders, including those responsible for managing the provision for children in the Nursery and Reception and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, check on achievement termly. Some are beginning to be involved in checking teaching directly, so that weaknesses can be tackled quickly and thoroughly.
- The local authority recognises that the school is improving rapidly. It arranged support and advice from another local school with its leaders working closely with the new leadership team. This ensured that they settled in quickly and became effective in raising achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The school does all it can to ensure all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed, and refuses to accept discrimination of any kind.
- The subjects studied by pupils in and out of school provide them with a wide range of learning experiences. Music has a high profile, with all Year 5 learning to play a brass instrument and pupils throughout learning to speak French and Spanish. The Comenius project has links to four countries and raises pupils' cultural awareness. Visits, visitors and studies of world religions through topics give pupils a good understanding of other faiths.
- The school works well with parents and carers, and most who responded to the inspection questionnaire were very positive. Those spoken to during the inspection agreed that pupils are happy, and without exception would recommend the school to others.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is effective because there is a wealth of relevant expertise amongst governors and all are deeply committed to improving the school. Financial resources, including pupil premium funding, are particularly well managed, providing a healthy surplus as the school prepares to increase in size. Governors have their own action plan and are reviewing the best way to help senior staff to check how effectively leaders and staff are doing their jobs. All have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and why certain aspects have been identified as key priorities in the current improvement plan. Governors see challenging questioning and regular visits to school as an effective way of stimulating continuous improvement. Each year the performance of the headteacher and teachers is checked using information about overall standards at the end of each key stage and through their own monitoring visits. The headteacher's pay is linked to this evaluation process. Governors have had recent training on aspects such as child protection and safeguarding. All current statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.

## 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>	121910
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406061

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	287
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Biddlecombe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ashley Izzard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 506404
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