

Lifton Community Primary School

North Road, Lifton, PL16 0EH

Inspection dates 11–12 December 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. This has resulted in the improving standards achieved by pupils in English and mathematics by the time they leave.
- Teachers mostly plan activities at the right level of difficulty for all pupils, including those who are disabled or with special educational needs.
- Pupils enjoy taking an active part in their learning and are especially keen to improve their work following their teachers' helpful comments.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They have a good attitude towards their work. They feel safe in school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from high-quality teaching and develop quickly. High expectations and well-established routines help support their start to school. This enables them to settle quickly and achieve well.
- The headteacher provides the school with good leadership. Her vision to improve the outcomes for pupils still further is shared by all staff and governors. In this school every child really does matter.
- Governors support the headteacher well to improve the quality of teaching and monitor teachers' performance, securing the improvements in pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers occasionally do not move pupils on to harder work quickly enough when they are finding tasks easy.
- Pupils' opportunities to think and learn by themselves are sometimes limited by having to spend too much time listening to the additional adults in lessons.
- Occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement, especially for the more-able pupils, are not high enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with half a day's notice and took place over two days.
- The inspector visited nine lessons and observed four teachers. The headteacher joined the inspector for a number of observations.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.
- The inspector took account of the 18 responses to the online Parent View survey and the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection.
- A privately managed pre-school is located within the school grounds but is inspected separately. The latest report can be found on the Ofsted website.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead Inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lifton is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Children are taught in four mixed-age classes. Children in the Reception Year are taught in the same class as some pupils from Year 1.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few have English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government to support different groups of pupils including those who are entitled to free school meals) is below average but increasing.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club on three mornings each week for pupils, which was inspected as part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement through improving the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers always move pupils on to harder work more quickly when it is clear that they find tasks easy
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations of what pupils, especially the more-able, can achieve are consistently high
 - ensuring that additional adults do not lead the learning too much in lessons so that pupils are always encouraged to think and learn by themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities that are generally below the levels normally expected for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy. However, the range of abilities is often wide between the small numbers involved.
- All children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. Most pupils reach levels that are broadly similar to what would normally be expected when they move into Key Stage 1, except in literacy and numeracy where levels remain slightly lower.
- Good progress continues across the school reflecting the good teaching. This is ensuring that some underachievement, due to weaker teaching in the past, is being redressed successfully. This has resulted in average, and improving, attainment at the end of Year 6. The gap in achievement that existed between English and mathematics is rapidly closing.
- The proportion of pupils currently at the school who make and exceed their expected progress compares favourably with the national average. Occasionally, more-able pupils do not do as well as they could because they are not moved on to harder tasks quickly enough.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language are supported well by teaching assistants. They make good progress from their individual starting points and are integrated in lessons as much as possible. This demonstrates that the school strongly promotes equality of opportunity for pupils.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. Additional staffing to support these pupils has led to an improvement in their achievement, which is now similar to that of all other pupils.
- The effective teaching of letters and sounds has helped pupils to improve their skills in reading and writing. They can read fluently, blending sounds well. Pupils in a Year 1/2 literacy lesson, for example, were observed writing short poems about stick men confidently on their own, using the letter sounds to support the spelling.
- Mathematics is taught well and pupils apply basic skills with ease to problems that they are presented with. In a Year 5/6 numeracy lesson, for example, pupils were challenged to solve problems about perimeters and areas of complex shapes. Working in small groups they used their shared learning and came up with several suitable solutions.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good over time. This enables all pupils to make good progress in all subjects.
- Using their secure subject knowledge, teachers mostly plan lessons well. Tasks are generally well matched (neither too easy nor too hard) to the abilities of all pupils, including those disabled or with special educational needs. However, a few tasks are not hard enough, especially for the more-able pupils, and consequently slow their progress.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were happy with the quality of teaching at the school and thought that their children made good progress. Pupils said that teaching had improved, was now good, and that lessons were fun.
- In lessons, most pupils are able to make at least good progress because of the strong emphasis on giving them the skills to think and learn for themselves. This was seen in the Year 1/2 class, for example, where pupils were able to use resources from the 'learning walls' independently to support their writing. However, this is not always the case and occasionally additional adults are providing too much instruction and advice for the pupils, restricting their ability to develop their thinking things out for themselves.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Activities are planned well to ensure that children's individual interests are reflected. Children in the Reception/Year 1 class were

able to choose from a range of activities, including those that support their development in numeracy by writing numbers up to 20 or role-play activities in the playhouse outside, developing their creativity.

- In the best lessons teachers use some excellent questioning to monitor pupils' progress. In these lessons pupils are redirected when appropriate, maintaining their good progress with tasks requiring them to think harder. However, in some lessons teachers' expectations are not high enough and they do not respond quickly enough when pupils are finding the work difficult or too easy. Consequently, a small number of pupils occasionally become distracted.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is of a high quality and provides pupils with clear pointers for improvements. This is well understood and appreciated by pupils who use the 'purple pen' to demonstrate improvements. Pupils assess their work and enjoy getting feedback from their classmates. 'Success ladders' are used across the school. Year 5/6 pupils were using a blank ladder to construct their own criteria so they could truly self-assess their story writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Pupils are well behaved and have been since the previous inspection. They are highly respectful of each other and their teachers.
- They enjoy their lessons and settle well to their work. Generally, their behaviour is good in lessons and their attitudes to learning are positive. On very rare occasions a few pupils misbehave and lose concentration or chat to each other. When this happens, it is usually because the teacher has not ensured that pupils have been provided with work at the right level of difficulty.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that there is no bullying of any kind, including physical, emotional or cyber bullying. They also say that the behaviour is good and that adults in school resolve any problems that they may have quickly and effectively.
- All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that behaviour at school was good and that their children were kept safe. Most agreed that bullying was effectively dealt with.
- Pupils are keen to undertake positions of responsibility at the school. Older pupils organising and leading the daily 'wake and shake' on the playground shows their commitment to the school. They are proud of their school and say they are especially grateful that more adventure equipment has been purchased to ensure safety and allow all children to play at the same time.
- Outside, pupils play and socialise together well. They think of each other, and all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, say they feel safe and very secure.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average, demonstrating the pupils' keenness to come to school. This has been further supported by the introduction and success of the breakfast club, which provides a social activity that encourages pupils to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads a team of leaders who share the vision to build on the significant improvements in pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching secured since the previous inspection. Along with an experienced governing body, all staff are determined to improve the life chances of all the pupils.
- Leaders use the regular assessments of pupils' progress to check that targets are challenging and overall performance is checked effectively. Intervention activities, such as one that uses games to improve reading, are proving very effective and support learning well. The progress of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs or those who have English as an

additional language is monitored to ensure that additional provision is effective.

- Leaders and governors share an understanding that high-quality teaching is necessary to secure high levels of achievement. Teachers' performance is checked closely to ensure there is a good match between how well teachers are paid and how well pupils learn. Training needs for teachers and teaching assistants are carefully identified and used to ensure that school improvement needs are met and enhanced.
 - The curriculum is effective and provides pupils with creative topics to study. Making good use of the local environment and regular visits, such as to Morwellham Quay for work focusing on life in Victorian times, enhance the learning experience for pupils. Extra-curricular activities are popular and are well attended by the pupils.
 - Residential visits, such as the Year 5 and 6 trip to London related to the Olympics, provided pupils with an opportunity to develop their understanding of different cultures outside their local area. The Key Stage 1 Nativity Play allowed pupils to show their pride, confidence and satisfaction in putting on a play for parents and carers. This demonstrates the commitment of leaders to ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fully embedded in everything that happens at the school.
 - Leaders robustly manage all statutory requirements relating to safeguarding.
 - The local authority now provides light touch support to this good school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows how well the school and the pupils are doing and supports the headteacher well. Governors have supported the improvement secured in the quality of teaching and have successfully challenged teachers to improve. Governors review teachers' performance regularly ensuring that salary progression reflects the quality of teaching and leadership responsibilities. The way in which leaders analyse how well the school is doing, and improvement planning, are understood by governors who ensure that changes improve pupils' achievement. Funding to the school is monitored effectively to evaluate the benefits. The headteacher is required to justify to governors how funding obtained through the pupil premium is spent and what impact it has on the outcomes for pupils. The attainment and progress of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium are checked regularly at progress meetings with the class teachers, which focus on the impact that the additional intervention activities provided, specifically for this group, have had on the individual pupils.
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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	113256
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	405461

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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma James
Headteacher	Kui Holmes
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 November 2010
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Fax number	01566 784899
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