

Lansdowne Primary Academy

Lansdowne Road, Tilbury, Essex, RM18 7QB

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The proportion of pupils making the progress they should varies between year groups.
- Teaching requires improvement because the pace of lessons is sometimes slow or tasks are too easy resulting in pupils making slower progress.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 5 do not have the mathematical skills and subject language to help them to make good progress.
- Pupils do not read and write well enough because there are gaps in their reading and writing skills that relate to previous weaknesses in their education.
- The balance of skills and subjects being taught across the academy has not resulted in good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership has improved teaching, behaviour and attendance. Inadequate teaching has been eliminated and the school is improving.
- Additional government funding has been used well to support pupils who need extra help. As a result, they receive effective individual support and make better progress than pupils in the rest of the school.
- The pupils' behaviour is good, their attitude to learning is good and they understand how to stay safe.
- Attendance is rising rapidly.
- Marking is done regularly and some provides clear guidance on how to improve.
- Governance is effective both at a local level and that provided by the academy trust.
- The governing body and senior staff manage teachers' performance effectively.
- Regular checking by senior leaders is effective in improving the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make.
- Information about how well pupils are doing is being used effectively to help them to improve and to plan any further support they need.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors conducted 27 lesson observations and reviewed five short sessions, seeing every teacher at work. Inspectors conducted eight joint observations with senior staff. All staff were offered professional feedback based on the lessons inspectors observed.
- Meetings and informal discussions were held with groups of pupils. Further meetings were arranged with the Chair of the local Governing Body and nominated staff. HMI spoke to the Chief Executive Officer of the Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC), the academy's parent body.
- The inspection team looked at the four responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the academy, including the academy improvement plan, the analysis of pupils' progress, the Principal's reports to the GLC Trust and the local governing body, and the minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

David Jones, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Abbott

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is just below the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national figure.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high and rising. As a result, the academy receives additional government funding (the pupil premium) for nearly 50% of the pupils in each year group, a figure well above the national average.
- The proportion of the pupils who need extra help with their learning because they are disabled or have special educational needs is well above average. These include pupils supported at school action, school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs.
- The Secretary of State agreed to the school becoming a sponsored academy within the Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC) with effect from 1 April 2012. The GLC is sponsored by the Ormiston Trust.
- The academy failed to meet the government's 2012 floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The academy houses a social communications unit for up to 12 pupils with moderate learning difficulties and Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The Principal is also head of the provision, which is funded by Thurrock Local Authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that it is at least good by:
 - ensuring that all lessons move at a rapid pace
 - ensuring that the work given to pupils is consistently matched to their needs.
- Improve pupils' progress in reading and writing and mathematics by:
 - developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills
 - improving the teaching of letters and the sound they make (phonics)
 - ensuring that the approach to teaching phonics is consistent in the lower school
 - making sure pupils understand their number facts, the method to be used in calculations and the mathematical language they use.
- Develop the role of the newly appointed middle leaders to:
 - oversee lesson planning and the level of challenge provided to ensure that work is not too easy for pupils
 - ensure that topic work supports the pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that the monitoring of pupil progress builds a term-by-term trend of improvement in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Previous weaknesses in teaching still show as gaps in the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in Years 3 to 6. In lessons pupils make stronger progress where they are given frequent opportunities to write and less progress where the introductions are too long. In mathematics pupil progress is sometimes slowed by a weak recall of number facts.
- The pupils' attainment was well below average at the beginning of the academy's first full year. The 2012 results show some improvement in all key stages and Year 6 pupils caught up rapidly so their overall progress, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, was at the expected rate.
- Progress has improved since September 2012 with pupils making one term's progress in the last half term as a result of the improvements secured in teaching.
- The large number of pupils supported by initiatives funded by the pupil premium make good, and occasionally, outstanding progress to reach standards that are now closer to the national average.
- Younger pupils are making the progress expected in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching has improved.
- The results of the Year 1 reading test were well below average because the teaching of reading through phonics (letters and the sounds they make) remains inconsistent between Reception and Year 2.
- Pupils at risk of not doing well and those who need extra help make better progress than other pupils. This includes disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those learning English as an additional language. They do well because of the effective, well-targeted support provided in-class and in small groups.
- Pupils supported in the unit make good progress because provision is organised well and the pupils have opportunities to join regular classes. They are supported well in class and they comment that they are pleased to have made friends. The Principal and a teacher in-charge lead this unit effectively.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there is not enough good teaching consistently available to promote good progress overall.
- Lessons are generally well organised. Teachers understand what they need to do to help pupils to improve. Some teachers do not allow enough time to review pupils' work at the end of the lesson and miss opportunities to ask thoughtful questions about what pupils know so they can check on pupil progress.
- The pace of some lessons is too slow or time is lost moving between whole-class teaching 'on the carpet' and small-group work. Some lessons fail to provide tasks that challenge the whole class.

- The teaching of literacy is not consistent. Where literacy lessons required improvement, opportunities to use pictures as clues to develop the pupils' vocabulary were missed.
- In some mathematics lessons that required improvement too much help was offered so that pupils did not have to think for themselves or the problems provided were too similar to provide the correct level of challenge.
- Key Stage and subject leaders are not involved enough in addressing the inconsistencies that remain in teaching.
- Teachers' marking offers pupils guidance on how to improve their work but this is not always written in language the pupils can understand.
- Some support staff listen carefully to the pupils' ideas and question effectively to improve learning.
- Where teaching is effective time is used well. For example, in a Nursery class session the teacher made good use of the morning registration time and its routines to build the pupils' speaking and listening skills. Similarly in a good Year 4 music lesson pupils created small performances combining sound and movement to represent animals of the rain forest. They planned and worked effectively to build a well-coordinated group performance. Staff guidance was well-judged; pupil engagement and behaviour were outstanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most pupils behave well around the school and in class.
- Pupils usually work cooperatively and many show good social skills. For example, in a good Year 3 literacy lesson pupils worked well in small groups to improve their story writing.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is some name-calling but they know they can trust staff to sort out any problems quickly.
- Most pupils enjoy learning. They want to answer questions and they take care over their work. In lessons where teaching requires improvement, a few sometimes work slowly and talk to each other about things that are not connected to the lesson.
- Pupils say bullying is rare. They understand different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and racism. Few parents contributed comments to Parent View but those that spoke to HMI said they were happy with the way the school looked after their child and that when bullying occurs, it is dealt with well. Pupils know how to keep safe.
- Attendance has risen significantly in the last year and is currently in line with the national average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The Principal and Vice Principal have worked quickly to improve pupils' behaviour and raise attendance. They are uncompromising and relentless in making sure that all pupils in the school receive the best education possible but acknowledge that more needs to be done to raise standards and improve pupil progress.

- Teaching has improved rapidly since the academy opened because of effective checking of how well teachers are helping pupils to make progress. Newly qualified teachers say they feel well supported but inexperienced staff do not have enough opportunities to observe the best teaching practice in the school.
- Senior staff consistently share their high expectations of teaching and learning, and this has been a key factor in the improvement in teaching. They make accurate judgements about how well teachers are helping pupils to improve.
- Consistent checks on pupil absence by the academy and strong support from the Gateway Learning Community Trust have secured a significant rise in attendance.
- The Principal and the governing body ensure that decisions about teachers' pay are closely linked to the effectiveness of their teaching, and the roles they fulfil.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities provided within assemblies and as part of the recently introduced International Primary Curriculum deliver opportunities to look at different cultures and ideas each week.
- The commercial literacy programme being used by the school is not, as yet, providing sufficient consistency in the teaching of phonics and reading in the lower school. The school's use of the International Primary Curriculum is not providing consistent opportunities to improve the pupils' language development and mathematical skills.
- Good support from the Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC) has helped the school to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully informed about how the school is performing through reports from the academy leaders and by regular visits to the school. They understand where teaching is most effective and check the impact of senior staff reviews of teaching. Governors set targets for the Principal, and check carefully how well these are being met. Governors monitor the impact of spending closely to ensure that the academy budget, including the pupil premium, is being used efficiently to help pupils make better progress. The local Governing Body ensures that requirements for the safeguarding of pupils are met. The working relationship between the local governing body and the Gateway Learning Community Trust is effective because the Chair of Governors and the Principal are both members of the board of directors. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the trust has a strong working relationship with the academy.

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	138048
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	409108

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	604
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave Wellard
Principal	Richard Epps
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01375 844184
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