

# Lambs Lane Primary School

Back Lane, Spencer's Wood, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 1JB

**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Teaching requires improvement – the work that teachers plan does not sufficiently challenge all pupils. Teachers' comments in books do not always help pupils know what they need to do next to improve their work.
- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because progress in different year groups and classes is too variable. Progress is slower in English and mathematics than expected, which leaves too much ground to be made up in Years 5 and 6.
- Leadership and management require improvement – leaders do not use information about pupils' progress carefully enough to check that pupils make sufficient progress.
- The governing body relies too heavily on the headteacher for information about the quality of teaching.
- The quality of presentation and handwriting in pupils' work is not good enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have started to take clear action to bring about improvements in pupils' achievements. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of each year group is rising.
- Good teaching in the Reception classes helps children get off to a good start at school. Sessions are planned well and help children to learn and develop successfully.
- The friendly pupils enjoy showing visitors around. They behave well and are keen to learn. They feel safe and are well cared for.
- Pupils who have statements of special educational needs and receive specialist help and those in the resource base make good progress. This is because teaching assistants provide sensitive and effective support, which enables them to be fully included in school life.
- Staff work well as a team. They are keen to improve their own practice and learn from each other.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, of which five were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour on the playground, around the school and at lunchtimes.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, subject leaders, staff, governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors heard some pupils read from Years 2 and 6 and meetings were held with two groups of pupils.
- Informal discussions were held with parents and carers at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the responses of 45 parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's most recent survey of parents and carers and the results of 16 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's plan for improvement, assessment and monitoring information, information on individual pupils' progress, records on behaviour and safety, teachers' plans, pupils' books and the minutes of meetings of the governing body.

## Inspection team

Catherine Leahy, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This primary school is of an average size, where the majority of pupils are White British.
- The school has a resource base, which provides places for up to 10 pupils with physical disabilities. Currently, four pupils access this provision.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for pupils in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra help with their learning from within the school (school action) is below average, while the number who need a greater level of support from the school (school action plus) is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and who receive specialist help from outside agencies is above average.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club, both of which are managed by the school.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The deputy headteacher is on secondment to a local school for this academic year. The inclusion manager is on maternity leave.
- The school currently has two Reception classes and two Year 2 classes so as to accommodate new pupils coming to live in the borough.

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

- Improve teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 so that all pupils make good or better progress in English and mathematics by:
  - using assessment information to plan lessons, which match the pupils' needs and abilities more precisely
  - ensuring that teachers check pupils' understanding and progress during lessons and make adjustments if the rate of learning slows
  - making sure that teachers' written marking always explains what pupils have done well and what they must do next to improve their work
  - making sure that teachers use a wide range of approaches when asking questions and by giving pupils sufficient time to work independently and extend their learning.
- Strengthen leaders' roles, including members of the governing body, in checking the school's performance so that they make a greater difference to improving pupils' achievement and progress by:
  - ensuring that the governing body has a better understanding of how well pupils are getting on and how good teaching is, so that it can ask challenging questions and is more effective in helping the school to improve
  - making sure that improvement plans have clear targets with precise ways of checking progress so that leaders can effectively assess how well initiatives are working
  - developing the skills of leaders who are in charge of their subjects so that they can regularly check teaching and learning to identify what needs to improve

- making sure leaders judge the quality of pupils' learning to determine the quality of teaching.
  
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, in some classes, pupils do not make good progress. More-able pupils and those who need extra support do not always make enough progress because the work planned is not challenging enough.
- Children start the school with skills and knowledge typically expected for their age. They get off to a good start and enjoy the well-planned activities in the vibrant, well-resourced Reception classrooms. By the time they move to Year 1, children are above the levels expected for this age.
- By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain higher than average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- For the past two years, standards at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics have been below the national average and pupils' progress was inadequate. The school has taken action and urgently rectified this and, consequently, current standards have improved considerably and are now above the national average. Those pupils who are capable of working at a higher level are also achieving much better.
- The school has implemented a structured approach to teaching the sounds letters make (often known as phonics) and, as a result, pupils in Key Stage 1 are confident in reading unfamiliar words. They enjoy reading daily and choosing books from the library. However, older pupils do not always use a range of strategies to find out what unfamiliar words mean.
- Pupils who receive extra help with their learning from within the school (school action and school action plus) make inconsistent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because their rate of learning is not monitored carefully enough and, as a result, the support they receive is not always appropriate.
- Pupils with complex specific needs, including those supported by the specialist resource provision, make good progress. This is because they benefit from high quality support that targets their specific needs well. This progress compares favourably with other pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in the school, when their significant needs are taken into account.
- The school has used its additional pupil premium funding well to enable those pupils known to be eligible to make good progress and attain well in English and mathematics.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good in some Key Stages 1 and 2 classes. Despite observing some outstanding teaching, the lack of consistency across these key stages means that pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- There are some examples of strong teaching in each key stage and in those classes pupils make good progress. This is particularly true, for example, where pupils are taught well about the sounds letters make. As a result, they read confidently and are not afraid to tackle unknown words.
- Good practice was observed in the Reception classes, where children were enthralled to receive a letter from Mr Frog, asking them to explore and choose materials to build him a house, which would float and not sink. The children worked together well, experimenting with a range of materials before completing the task successfully.
- When planning lessons, some teachers do not take enough account of what the pupils already know and what they need to learn next. Assessment information is not always used carefully enough to plan work which precisely meets the needs of all pupils.
- Work is not always pitched at the right level for the pupils' abilities. In one mathematics lesson where the pupils were learning to interpret graphs, the more-able pupils found the work too

easy. In a literacy lesson, pupils were slow to get going with their story writing because they were allowed to spend too long in the lesson drawing rather than extending their learning through independent work.

- In the best lessons, teachers use an interesting range of approaches to question pupils about their learning. However, not all teachers challenge pupils to think deeply or give them enough chance to explore and extend their thoughts and ideas.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work, but it is less effective when the pupils are not told clearly what they need to do to improve.
- The school has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' presentation of work and quality of handwriting. Although new guidelines for teachers are now in place, it is not yet making a difference in enabling pupils to present their work to the best effect.
- Teachers display good classroom and pupil management skills. They have developed very good relationships with pupils, which supports positive learning in all classes.
- Small-group teaching for pupils who find learning more difficult (school action and school action plus) requires improvement because these pupils are not receiving sufficiently targeted support. This is because actions put in place to speed pupils' progress are not being checked often enough to see if they are making a difference to pupils' learning. In contrast, those pupils with complex needs and those receiving support to manage their behaviour are taught well and make good progress.
- Teaching assistants give very good support to those pupils who have statements of special educational needs. They are sensitive to their specific needs and encourage the pupils to work with their class when it is appropriate to do so.
- Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning. However, a few parents and carers are concerned that their child is not receiving appropriate homework.

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

- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is good. This is also true in the breakfast and after-school club. They are extremely polite to visitors and say everyone is kind to each other.
- Pupils respect the school's behaviour policy, 'Good to be Green', and are clear about what happens if behaviour standards fall. The headteacher tracks any problems, which enables the school to spot patterns of unacceptable behaviour and make the changes needed. The school's behaviour records show a declining number of incidents.
- The few pupils with behavioural needs are very well supported and included throughout the school. The school places a strong emphasis on the well-being of all pupils. There have been no exclusions during the last 15 months.
- Bullying of all kinds, including cyber bullying or racially motivated bullying, is rare. Pupils say any bullying would, 'definitely be sorted out'. The school promotes safe internet use. Regular assemblies on the subject of anti-bullying raise pupils' awareness of strategies to use if they feel unsafe.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of playground activities at lunchtimes. They are well supervised and pupils with statements of special educational needs join in enthusiastically and are well supported by their friends.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the on-line Parent View survey feel their child is safe and happy at school. Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors during the inspection agreed with this view.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to take part in the wide range of clubs provided for them.
- Pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 benefit from residential visits to promote independence and team-building. These visits also prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because in lessons that require improvement, pupils are not always engaged in learning and do not make the progress they are capable of.

**The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Leaders know what needs to be improved. They have responded to their new roles with enthusiasm. Improved systems to monitor pupils' progress were introduced in September 2012. As a result, pupils' achievement and progress have improved because the school is holding regular pupil progress meetings, which are beginning to support staff in knowing how well pupils in their class are doing.
- Plans for improvement are in place, although subject leaders are not always clear who will monitor the impact of actions taken.
- The headteacher regularly checks on the quality of teaching. Areas for improvement are identified and guidance given to teachers. This is increasing the proportion of more effective teaching and other leaders have started to receive training to enable them to give accurate and robust feedback to staff to further improve teaching and learning.
- Equality of opportunity has a high priority and any discrimination is not tolerated. Specialist services are regularly used successfully, when pupils need help.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Parents and carers spoke glowingly about their children's progress since starting school. The headteacher is also providing good leadership for pupils accessing support from the specialist provision resource during the inclusion leader's absence.
- Appropriate systems are in place for staff performance management. Salary levels and promotion are linked to improving teaching and pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' needs. Pupils particularly enjoyed researching their Victorian topic in Year 5 and 6 and carrying out experiments for the topic on plants in Years 3 and 4. The school has identified where improvements need to be made to ensure the curriculum is well taught in all classes.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in an excellent assembly, pupils were challenged to think deeply about the importance of being courageous and overcoming fear. A recent whole-school topic on India encouraged pupils to be tolerant and understanding of other people's beliefs and values.
- The local authority has recently monitored and reviewed the quality of teaching and learning, which has had some success in improving the consistency and quality of teaching.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. Records are robust and monitored regularly by the governor responsible. Systems to keep pupils safe meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The headteacher ensures that members of the governing body are well informed about pupils' progress. This enables them to ask challenging questions and probe the school about the achievements of different groups of pupils. However, they are less sure where teaching is strongest and where it requires improvement.
  - The governing body fulfil its statutory duties in relation to safeguarding and manages the school's finances effectively. The governing body is knowledgeable about the additional government funding, which comes to the school through the pupil premium, and they monitor the difference it is making to pupils' achievements. Members of the governing body attend regular training sessions to keep up to date with all aspects of their work.
  - The governing body has been fully involved in strengthening the leadership team during the absence of the deputy headteacher and inclusion manager. However, they have yet to monitor the link between how well staff perform and the salaries they receive.

## 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>	109830
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	405255

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>	234
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Hyde
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Finn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 July 2011
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