

# Laindon Park Primary School

Church Hill, Laindon, Basildon, SS15 5SE

**Inspection dates** 16–17 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Leaders' plans for improving the school are having some impact, but do not focus enough on the actions necessary to increase pupils' progress to promote good overall achievement.
- The governing body does not challenge the school effectively to help it perform better.
- Standards in English and mathematics fluctuate too much from one year to the next. Pupils have few opportunities to develop the skills they learn in literacy and numeracy in other subjects.
- Teaching requires improvement. Although some good practice was seen, teachers do not vary their teaching methods or planned activities enough to fully and consistently meet the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in their classes.
- Marking does not always give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.
- Pupils' handwriting, particularly in Key Stage 2, is not neat and well formed, and they are not encouraged to take care over the presentation of their work.

### The school has the following strengths

- Increasingly effective teaching in Key Stage 1 is resulting in pupils making more rapid progress, and their attainment is rising.
- Teachers take a consistently effective approach to managing the pupils' behaviour, so they know what is expected of them and behave well in and out of lessons. The school is a calm and happy place.
- Pupils are generally keen to learn, enjoy school and try hard to make everyone feel welcome. Attendance is improving.
- Staff and governors make sure pupils are well cared for, and that safeguarding procedures are rigorously implemented. As a result, pupils say they feel safe and secure.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were seen together with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone discussions was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and held informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on the pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also listened to the reading of a sample of pupils in Years 1 and 2.

## Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Watson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is very low.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is broadly average. This is extra money given to schools to help certain groups. In this school it applies to pupils in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- More pupils than in most other primary schools join or leave partway through their primary school education.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in combined Nursery and Reception classes. Older pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.
- The school uses alternative provision for a very small number of pupils. This is through the Children's Support Centre in Harlow.
- The governing body runs a breakfast club and an after-school club each day.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better across the school by:
  - enabling teachers to develop their skills by observing and working alongside outstanding teachers and other trainers
  - recording children's progress systematically in the Nursery and Reception classes, and using the results carefully to plan subsequent learning
  - ensuring that lessons in mathematics more consistently meet the needs of all pupils, and particularly those eligible for the pupil premium
  - moving lessons in all subjects on at a brisk pace, supported by stimulating activities
  - providing regular, planned opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics
  - giving better guidance in marking and the use of targets to help pupils improve their work
  - implementing a policy on handwriting and the presentation of work.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership, including that by governors, by:
  - introducing more rigorous procedures for monitoring teaching quality and its impact on pupils' performance
  - ensuring that planning for improvement is sharply focused on actions that will increase pupils' progress, and underpinned by suitable training to help teachers meet challenging targets
  - undertaking an external review of the role of the governing body, to ensure that governors are better informed about how well the school is performing and do more to challenge senior leaders over its performance.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The progress pupils make in each year group, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, varies too much to support good overall achievement. This is largely because teaching does not meet all pupils' needs precisely enough.
- Children's attainment when they enter the Nursery and Reception classes is very varied. It has been below expected levels in some years but above expected levels in others. Children develop good social skills and feel safe and secure in both classes. However, teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure they all make good progress from their different starting points.
- Year 6 test results rose in 2012, particularly in English, and were broadly average. However, the fluctuations in Year 6 attainment for this age group do not always follow the pattern of the same pupils' attainment on entry, and the school is not doing enough to make sure pupils reach the standards they are capable of by the end of the Year 6.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding to provide individual coaching for eligible pupils, including during holidays, although this has not led to significant closing of gaps in attainment. The Year 6 national test results in 2012 showed that this group had made similar progress to their classmates in English but much slower progress in mathematics. Their test results were six months behind others in English but almost three years behind in mathematics.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to apply their number skills to solve mathematical problems or to develop their mathematics skills across other subjects. They are encouraged to undertake extended pieces of writing in English, but rarely develop and extend their skills in other subjects. Teachers do not pay enough attention to ensuring that their handwriting is as neat as it should be for their age by Key Stage 2.
- Pupils who enter the school late or in different year groups generally make fluctuating progress in line with other pupils. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
- Improvements in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) are helping pupils to apply their skills confidently when confronted by new and unfamiliar words. Pupils across the school read widely and some are avid readers at home, taking great enjoyment from the work of particular authors.
- Support for pupils educated away from the school site is usually good. It is carefully tailored to cater for their learning needs and emotional difficulties, and makes a good contribution to their academic progress.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although there is some good teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, teachers do not consistently plan their lessons carefully enough to meet pupils' needs. Introductions sometimes last too long, and are sometimes too hard for the less-able pupils and too easy for the more-able pupils. In these lessons, the pace drops and the pupils' concentration waivers.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers do not record children's progress sufficiently, or use this information to plan activities to meet the next steps in their learning. The exception to

this is the good provision for children who have specific health needs.

- In general, marking provides only limited guidance for pupils on how to improve their work, and individual targets for pupils are not used to guide their work sufficiently. There are some examples of effective marking in Years 1 and 2, where pupils respond readily to their teacher's comments on how their writing can be improved. Here, tangible improvements can be seen in pupils' work, but this good practice is not consistent across the school.
- Where teaching is effective, particularly in Key Stage 1, lessons move at a brisk pace, with teachers keeping the pupils on their toes and never letting their concentration slip. In these lessons, teachers use discussion and groups activities to help pupils learn from each other. Imaginative use is also made of new technology and other resources. Not enough lessons across the school have these good features.
- Teaching assistants made a considerable contribution to the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs when supporting them in class or when leading catch-up sessions. They have established trusting relationships and understand the pupils' specific needs.

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

- Pupils behave well and move sensibly around the school at all times. They are well mannered, show respect for others and are polite and courteous. Pupils are happy and enjoy school, as reflected in their improving attendance. The school's success at tackling discrimination is shown by the way pupils from all backgrounds work and play happily together.
- Pupils welcome newcomers and help them settle into the school 'family' by making sure they quickly find new friends. They also enjoy helping others, both in lessons and when at play, which makes for a harmonious and friendly atmosphere around the school despite them not yet having a formal voice in school developments.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, such as through e-safety training. They say bullying is rare and any incidents are dealt with swiftly by staff. Usually any problems are friends falling out or silly name-calling, most of which they resolve themselves.
- Most pupils try hard in lessons and want to do well, although the untidy presentation of work in Key Stage 2 shows that some do not take enough pride in their achievements. They say that lessons are rarely disturbed by inappropriate behaviour, although in the lessons observed some pupils occasionally lost concentration when teaching was less inspiring or did not meet their particular needs.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Leaders at all levels monitor teaching and learning regularly, but do not do so sufficiently rigorously. As a result their planning for improvement focuses on the right general areas and has the capacity to improve pupils' education, but is not yet precise enough to identify the actions needed to raise the quality of teaching or pupils' progress and attainment to the next level.
- The headteacher makes sure only effective teaching is rewarded by pay rises, but does not use the procedures for managing staff performance to drive up quality rapidly. For example,

teachers are set reasonably challenging targets but not always given sufficient guidance to achieve them. Consequently, teaching is improving too slowly and not enough is yet of a good quality.

- The school has not worked closely with the local authority, instead seeking support and guidance elsewhere. It has not provided sufficient training opportunities, or brought examples of high-quality teaching into the school, to help teachers understand how best to improve their teaching.
  - Much time is focused each day on teaching English and mathematics, but there is no clear plan by which pupils can apply and develop literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects.
  - The school is keen to make sure all pupils have an equal chance of success, and that no-one is left behind. This is reflected in the careful way assessment data are analysed to track progress, and support is provided if any pupil seems to be falling short of their targets. It is also strongly committed to supporting pupils when they are educated away from the school site, by regularly checking their progress and development.
  - Careful attention is given to promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, so that they gain a wider understanding of the world and how others live. In one excellent example, pupils met a survivor of the holocaust, which left them with a lasting memory and an understanding of the importance of compassion.
  - The school tries hard to engage with parents. Family counselling has proved valuable for those who have taken advantage of this initiative, and the breakfast and after-school clubs are both well attended and popular with parents.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors support the school very well but do not challenge senior leaders enough over its performance. They undertake regular training to update their expertise, including in understanding assessment data. This gives them a broad understanding of how well the school is doing, but they have a somewhat inflated view of the quality of teaching and the pupils' achievement. Governors understand the procedures used by the headteacher to improve teaching and to reward good performance, but have not checked to see whether this is driving up teaching quality and the pupils' progress. Governors monitor most spending plans, but are not fully aware of the impact of pupil premium funding on the attainment of eligible 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114802
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	412918

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>	171
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maureen Larkin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cristina Portoles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 544808
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