

Tennyson Road Primary School

Tennyson Road, Luton, LU1 3RS

Inspection dates 16–17 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Excellent leadership by the headteacher, the commitment and support of senior leaders, staff and the challenges given by the governing body have ensured that the school has moved forward since the previous inspection in its quality of teaching and in pupils' achievement.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is outstanding.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average and rising.
- Standards at the end of Year 2, in reading and writing are usually higher than those in mathematics.
- Consistently good teaching and the numerous lessons in which teaching is outstanding ensure that pupils make excellent progress.
- Potentially vulnerable pupils and those who find learning difficult are supported very well.
- Teachers mark pupils' work methodically and offer helpful guidance improve their work but do not always check to make certain that the advice has been followed.
- Pupils' behaviour and understanding of personal safety are excellent.
- Close links with local schools help promote good and outstanding practice.
- The school development plan is well thought out and based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- There are well-founded plans for extending the school in September 2013 and taking over other school premises.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of shorter visits to lessons. They heard some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils’ attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the 39 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in making their judgements and 21 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Lavelle	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- A minority of the pupils are of White British background. The majority come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is considerably higher than average. A few are currently at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. In contrast, the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority or who have a parent in the armed forces) is above average. There are no pupils currently in the school who have a parent in the armed forces.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual starting or finishing times is significantly higher than average.
- The privately run on-site breakfast and after-school clubs were not visited as part of this inspection.
- It is planned to increase the size of the school from a one-form to a three-form entry in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more pupils attain the higher Level 3 in mathematics by the end of Year 2 by:
 - making certain that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make more rapid progress in developing their skills in calculating and in understanding shape, space and measures
 - providing a greater level of challenge for more-able pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure that all teachers build on the exemplary practice in marking by always checking that pupils have acted on the advice to help them improve their work and reach their targets.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge broadly in line with what is typical for their age group, except in communication, language and literacy, which are below the level usually found.
- Children settle quickly in a safe and secure environment where they form positive relationships with the adults and other children. They are confident and make excellent progress developing their skills in communication, language and literacy and good progress in the other areas of learning. By the end of the year, they are generally working above the nationally expected levels. However, in mathematics, their attainment is not quite as high. This is because some children have not fully developed their skills in calculation and have yet to consolidate their understanding of shape, space and measures.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils are making good progress and on track to reach above-average standards by the end of Year 2. In the past, pupils' progress in this key stage has not been as rapid because there was insufficient challenge for the more-able pupils. This is successfully being tackled in reading and writing but not to the same extent in mathematics. The expectations of some pupils, who could potentially attain the higher Level 3 in the end of Year 2 teacher assessments, are not always high.
- For the last two years, pupils in Year 6 reached at least the expected level (Level 4) in English and mathematics. Overall, standards were significantly above average. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach similar results but with a greater proportion of the pupils gaining the higher Level 5. More pupils are reaching higher standards and making outstanding progress because of improvements in teaching and better use of assessment information to set challenging targets for each pupil.
- Pupils are developing their reading skills well. The structured approach to the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in the Reception class and the support offered to older pupils ensure they use their knowledge to read unfamiliar works. By the time they leave, pupils are reading confidently. They can talk about their favourite books and recommend books to each other. They read regularly at home and write book reviews.
- Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. Their writing skills are consolidated and extended in other subjects, which are linked together through the well-thought-out creative curriculum.
- In mathematics, pupils have a secure understanding of number. For example, pupils in Year 6 confidently tackled mathematical puzzles from a daily newspaper which included complex calculations involving fractions and percentages. Pupils in Year 5 carefully checked work that had been incorrectly completed to find out where the mistakes had been made and suggested how the correct answer could be reached.
- Pupils in all classes make good use of information and communication technology. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage used ipads confidently to support their work in mathematics, while older pupils used them effectively to undertake research and to practise their writing skills.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make excellent progress because the school uses this additional funding effectively to provide additional support staff, further support for reading, extra-curricular activities and to strengthen links with parents. In 2012, the standards

these pupils attained in English and mathematics in Year 6, when compared to other pupils in the school, were similar in English and marginally higher in mathematics. In comparison to all pupils generating pupil premium funding, standards were exceptionally high and approximately eight months ahead of all pupils nationally.

- Pupils who join the school mid-way through their school career, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make better progress than their peers nationally. This is because regular checks are made to see how well they are doing and they receive additional support to move learning on when necessary.
- Personal help and effective use of a versatile computer programme which supports pupils – and parents – who are at the early stages of learning English enables them to make excellent progress in use of English. These pupils make better progress than similar pupils, nationally.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Across the school, much of the teaching is outstanding and never less than good, including the teaching of literacy and mathematics. As a result, all groups of pupils are making rapid and sustained progress.
- Teachers have responded positively to initiatives to improve their teaching skills and are working closely with colleagues in other schools to develop and share outstanding practice.
- Lessons are well planned. The work is pitched at the right level across the full range of ability. Expectations are usually high but, sometimes, not enough is expected of the more-able younger pupils in mathematics.
- All lessons proceed at a brisk pace and information and communication technology is used well to make learning more interesting. Teachers use questioning strategies skilfully to build on pupils' earlier learning. They manage pupils' behaviour well and encourage them to share their ideas with each other and with the adults. Teaching assistants support work in small groups effectively and help the pupils to make progress.
- At the end of lessons, teachers regularly ask pupils how well they think they have done and give them the opportunity to check their learning against their targets. Pupils respond enthusiastically and systematically record their achievements in their detailed target-setting booklet.
- Teachers and support staff strive to ensure that all pupils, including vulnerable pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are fully included and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils. Systems for supporting pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are well established.
- The marking of pupils' work is exemplary. There are many excellent examples of marking which help pupils towards their targets. Most pupils respond well to these comments but when pupils do not take on board the advice offered it is not always followed up in later marking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They are proud of their school and keen to become 'school ambassadors'. Their attendance has improved steadily and has risen

to be, currently, above average for primary schools. This is because pupils enjoy coming to school and lessons are interesting. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning help them to make excellent progress.

- Pupils treat equipment and the building with respect and contribute to the school by taking on a range of responsibilities. Lessons are very rarely interrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils are polite and routinely demonstrate good manners. They greet visitors with a smile and words of welcome, and routinely hold doors open for adults.
- Pupils say that there have been no bullying incidents, such as name-calling, fighting, racial, religious or cyber-bullying. They are confident that if an incident occurred, it would be dealt with quickly and fairly. High-quality displays around the school reflect the emphasis placed on ensuring that pupils know about the different kinds of bullying and how to deal with it.
- There have been no reported incidents of racist behaviour. Pupils from the many different ethnic backgrounds get on well together. They value and respect each other's heritage. This contributes effectively to their cultural development.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have an in-depth understanding of potential dangers, for example when using computers to access the internet and when leaving the school premises.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher sets high expectations and works effectively with all staff to improve teaching and to raise standards. Senior and middle leaders undertake their roles well and contribute much to the development of the school.
- The headteacher and senior staff monitor teaching and its impact on pupils' learning closely. Pupils are set challenging targets and their progress is assessed several times during the year. The headteacher asks teachers to explain if any pupils are not on track to achieve their targets and what they are going to do about it. The information from these discussions and the progress the pupils make are used by the governing body to determine whether any individual member of staff should be paid more.
- In all classes, there is a strong focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and, where appropriate, brought together through a well-thought-out theme or topic. A well-organised, extensive bank of interesting artefacts is available to support each topic. These stimulate the pupils' interest and enhance their learning.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to enrich their education, for example, by playing a musical instrument, undertaking various responsibilities and taking part in educational visits. The opportunities for pupils from the many different cultural backgrounds to work together promote their social development and prepare them well to live in today's multicultural society.
- The school development plan is based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Local authority officers have monitored the school's performance and supported the school in developing links with other schools. However, as the school demonstrates such impressive results, there has been no further support offered.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body makes sure the school meets requirements for safeguarding pupils. Governors undertake regular training and are very effective in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. They provide an appropriate balance between support and challenge and ensure that all teaching is at least good. They check on the outcomes for pupils and promote equality of opportunity effectively. Discriminatory practices are not tolerated. The governing body responds promptly to national initiatives, for example, the updating of the school's policy for the appraisal of teachers' performance. As a result, governors have a good understanding of how targets are set for teachers to improve and the process for rewarding good teaching. The school's finances are monitored well. The governing body makes sure that pupil premium funding is being spent wisely and that it is contributing to eligible pupils making accelerated progress. Governors share the vision for the development of the school and have taken an active role in planning its expansion.

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	109557
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	403091

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Cowan
Headteacher	Hilary Power
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2007
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