

Lyminster Primary School

Wick Street, Littlehampton, BN17 7JZ

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 and adults alike enjoy learning at Lyminster Primary School. Imaginative teaching motivates pupils and they achieve well. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about their learning experiences.
- Good links across subjects help to make learning meaningful and fun. Pupils develop a love of reading and engage positively in daily opportunities to enjoy books.
- The quality of teaching is good across the school. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils of differing abilities make good progress.
- Pupils feel safe at school and behave well. Pupils, parents and staff express mostly positive views about behaviour and safety.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength of the school, particularly through the variety and vibrancy of experiences and opportunities provided.
- Leaders at different levels, including the governing body, are passionate in their drive to make the school the best it can be. Through their clear and consistent messages, together with the high morale and involvement of staff at all levels, the school is moving forward in the right direction.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. The level of challenge for pupils of different abilities is not always precise enough to promote the more rapid progress that leads to outstanding achievement.
- Leaders at all levels are not fully involved in evaluating and improving the quality of teaching and learning through observing in classrooms.
- While teachers' marking sometimes helps pupils improve their work, the quality is too variable.
- Although staff generally have high expectations of pupils, targets for the rate of pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 are not sufficiently challenging to be likely to lead to outstanding achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector made 14 visits to lessons across all five classes to evaluate teaching and learning. The headteacher joined him for over half of these observations.
- The inspector talked with pupils about their learning and experiences of school, examined their work and listened to them read.
- He spoke with parents, staff, six members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector analysed 21 responses to the online survey (Parent View) and took account of nine questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including information about the progress of pupils currently in school, the school's own monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, records of behaviour and incidents, and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families) is broadly in line with the national average. Currently, no looked after children or children of service families attend the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The school converted from infant to primary in September 2011, when the Year 2 cohort became the school's first Year 3. The school will continue to expand by one class per year until this cohort reaches Year 6 in September 2014. The oldest pupils are currently in Year 4.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that much is outstanding by:
 - focusing more sharply in lessons on what pupils of different abilities need to learn to make rapid progress so that all are sufficiently challenged
 - implementing plans to review the school's marking policy to secure greater consistency across the school
 - involving leaders at different levels in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that targets for the rates of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 are challenging enough to support the school's drive to secure outstanding achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. They are overwhelmingly positive about their learning experiences because adults make sure that learning is fun and create good links between subjects. In Year 3, for example, pupils created Roman characters from their history topic to use when developing their story writing. Pupils have regular opportunities to develop their problem solving and investigation skills in science or mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start learning their letters and sounds (phonics) to help them read and write. Last year, most Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check, much higher than the proportion seen nationally. Across the school, pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and relish the frequent opportunities to read and enjoy books.
- Each year, a varying but significant proportion of children start in Reception Year with a range of knowledge and skills that is narrower than those expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that the number of pupils working at age-appropriate levels increases, although the gap with national averages has not always closed completely in all areas by the time they enter Year 1.
- Over time, pupils have reached broadly average levels at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion that reaches above-average levels is slightly higher than average. This represents good achievement from pupils' starting points. The standards achieved by the current Year 2 are set to rise, reversing a dip in results in 2012. Teaching and tasks are not consistently pitched at precisely the right level of challenge for pupils of different abilities to help them make the rapid progress required for outstanding achievement.
- The rates of progress for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium are accelerating. Their good achievement reflects the school's successful promotion of equal opportunities. Careful tracking of the progress made by these pupils, and effective individual or small group support, is helping them catch up. In 2012, the gap between the levels attained by pupils eligible for pupil premium and the rest closed significantly in reading, writing and mathematics so that it was smaller than the gap seen nationally.
- As the first group of pupils entered Key Stage 2, their rates of progress slowed initially. However, these have now begun to accelerate again. The good quality of teaching across both Key Stage 2 classes means that current Year 3 pupils are also making quicker progress than Year 3 pupils did last year. Consequently, the proportions that are working at levels above those expected for their age continue to rise steadily.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good across the school. Pupils greatly appreciate the effort made by teachers and teaching assistants to dress up and role-play characters to teach different lessons. Under the watchful eye of 'Professor Flabbergast', Year 4 pupils were developing a secure grasp of the concept of a fair test in science, while in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 'Mrs Badger' invited the children to her woodland home to compare and contrast habitats.
- Teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively to support learning, including for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Adults' subject knowledge is good and they ask effective questions to deepen pupils' understanding, for example in Year 2, where pupils clearly developed their answers because they had time to consider their responses.
- Where teaching is most effective, there is a sharp focus on what pupils of different abilities are learning. For example, in Year 1, in an imaginative, engaging and varied way, teaching and tasks linked strongly when pupils put verbs into the past tense, with the more able pupils applying these skills to write a recount. However, when pupils of differing abilities tackle the same tasks independently, it is not always clear enough what the expectations for them are at their own

level of ability. In this circumstance, pupils make less progress than they otherwise might.

- Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas together and work collaboratively. Pupils make the most of these opportunities, usually remaining on task.
- Pupils receive good verbal feedback during lessons. Leaders have correctly identified that the quality of written marking is too variable and have made plans to address this. Marking is encouraging and tells pupils what they have done well. However, it does not show them how to improve regularly enough. Where it does, pupils do not always have chance to respond so causing the impact to be lost.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils feel safe at school and develop a good understanding of how to keep safe, on the road, through learning to swim and in their developing understanding of new technologies as they grow older.
- Teachers use the school's behaviour policy well in lessons. Occasionally, when the level of challenge is not quite right, the attention of a few pupils drifts, but this does not usually disrupt others. Pupils, parents, staff and governors all report how the system of rewards and sanctions has led to improvements and mostly feel that behaviour is usually good. This confirms the picture of good or better behaviour observed during the inspection.
- Pupils work well together and are respectful to each other. They are polite and welcoming, and quickly responsive to adults. There is no evidence of discrimination and there have are no recorded racist incidents in recent years.
- Most parents agree that the school deals effectively with bullying. Pupils have a sound understanding of the different forms bullying can take and most think that it rarely is a problem. Pupils mix well in lessons and at playtimes. However, some of the older pupils feel that the behaviour of a few is at times too rough or verbally unkind. That said, they are confident that adults always deal with any issues effectively, and school records confirm this.
- In recent years, pupils' attendance has improved at a faster rate than seen nationally, rising above the national average in 2012.

The leadership and management are good

- Staff morale is high and the school is improving well. Leaders are thoughtful and reflective in their management of the gradual transition to full primary and correctly evaluate that the school currently provides a good standard of education. Before the dip in 2012, Key Stage 1 results had shown sustained improvements for several years, and they are set to rise again this year. Alongside improvements in attendance, the school is demonstrating that it has the capacity to improve.
- The local authority shares this confidence in the school's capacity and consequently provides light-touch support, holding discussions with the headteacher about the school's own evaluations and plans for improvement.
- School leaders at different levels have a good understanding of the school's performance and provide consistent messages about its ethos and direction. The headteacher recognises the need to strengthen their roles further, particularly in observing teaching and providing feedback to drive further improvement.
- Leaders and teachers work together in the rigorous analysis of data about the progress of individuals and groups to identify any variations and take effective action to close deficiencies. Although staff generally have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, current targets for the rate of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 are not high enough to drive the rapid progress that is likely to lead to outstanding achievement by the time pupils leave.

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- Teachers are increasingly accountable for the progress made by pupils in their classes, not least by providing parents online access to their children’s current attainment levels and progress.
 - The promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength of the school. Meticulously presented displays of pupils’ attractive artwork, inspired by a wide range of artists and cultures, enhance the school’s vibrant atmosphere and environment. The school enjoys links with schools in Scotland, Sri Lanka and India, giving pupils opportunities to learn about contexts away from their immediate experiences. Good links across subjects help make learning meaningful for pupils.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a secure knowledge and understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement through detailed reports from the headteacher, use of published data benchmarked against national statistics and visits to school. They provide good support for school leaders and ask challenging questions in their shared ambition to be an outstanding school. This is particularly evident with regard to financial decisions, including the use and impact of pupil premium funding. Individual governors attend a wide range of training to help them fulfil their roles, although the governing body is too reliant on the headteacher’s interpretation and explanation of performance data to be fully robust in holding school leaders to account. The governing body is well informed about performance management arrangements, and current pay levels reflect strongly the good quality of teaching. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
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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	125927
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	400214

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	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Henville
Headteacher	Helen Jane Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 February 2010
Telephone number	01903 713642
Fax number	01903 732013
Email address	office@lyminster.w-sussex.sch.uk

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