

Lofthouse Gate Primary School

Canal Lane, Lofthouse Gate, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF3 3HU

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- The progress pupils make throughout the school is good and sometimes, particularly for older pupils, it is outstanding.
- By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, their standards and progress are above those of pupils of the same age in other schools.
- Teaching is good overall and sometimes it is outstanding.
- Pupils are stimulated and highly engaged by being actively involved in their learning.
- Independent learning is a strong feature of lessons to help prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and are well educated about how to keep themselves safe.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision for the future of the school and high aspirations.
- The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate and any identified weaknesses are quickly addressed.
- Governors ensure that their skills enhance and support the school. They take time to make regular visits and thoroughly analyse information.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all senior leaders are fully accountable for their new areas of responsibility.
- The marking of pupils' work is not consistently good across the school. Not all teachers inform pupils about how they can improve their work or correct misspelt words.
- Teachers do not always make pupils think hard enough through skilful questioning.
- Some pupils spend too much time repeating work when they are capable of beginning new learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed the teaching and learning in 19 lessons in all the classes. Some of these lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed activities such as art and cooking. They also observed the teaching of support strategies such as the Early Birds Breakfast Club.
- The inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books to consider achievement and teaching over time. This was undertaken alongside the deputy headteacher.
- Ten per cent of parents responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Their views were considered by the inspectors alongside responses from a staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils as well as staff, senior leaders, members of the governing body and external consultants.
- A number of documents were studied, including the school's evaluations of its performance, external evaluations, policies, information about pupils' progress, performance management files and case studies. Documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance were also seen.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2011, with the deputy headteacher joining the school in April 2012. There has been a new team structure to the senior leadership team following those two appointments.

Inspection team

Joanna Sharpe, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Karen Foster

Additional Inspector

Juliet Demster

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than that found in most schools. (The pupil premium is extra funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children that are looked after and children of families in the services.)
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is expecting to become part of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust from September 2013. It is currently a strategic partner with the Outwood Teaching School Alliance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the role of the senior leadership team in improving teaching and learning by ensuring that all senior leaders are fully accountable for all aspects of their roles.

- Offer more challenge to all pupils, to improve achievement, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - inform pupils how they can improve their work, when marking their books
 - correct misspellings in line with the school policy
 - question pupils more skilfully to make them think harder for themselves
 - start learning in each lesson at an appropriate level for every pupil, so that some are not continually repeating work before moving on to new learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school in Nursery with skills that are generally at age-related expectations, although their personal, social and emotional development is somewhat immature. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, they have skills in English and mathematics which are well above those expected for their age.
- Historically, teaching has not been as strong for younger pupils and this caused a slight decline in their standards and progress. Improvements in teaching mean that the progress of younger pupils is once again good. The standards and progress of older pupils are consistently good or outstanding.
- The proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress in mathematics is consistently well above that of other pupils nationally.
- A dip in standards in reading at the end of Year 6 in 2012 was quickly addressed and progress and standards in this subject are, once again, outstanding. Scores for the Year 1 check of pupils' knowledge of letters and letter-sounds have also improved exceptionally quickly. This is due to the effective introduction of a number of different strategies, such as focused support, and online and lesson-based schemes.
- The proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress in writing by the end of Year 6 is higher than that of other schools nationally. However, standards and progress in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- Early, accurate identification of pupils' individual needs leads to a range of varied and well-targeted support strategies across the school, such as The Early Birds Breakfast Club. This allows pupils eligible for the pupil premium and those identified as having special educational needs to make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress. The school ensures relations are good and that no child lacks opportunities or is discriminated against.
- In Year 6, pupils eligible for the pupil premium make outstanding progress. School data show that these pupils are approximately two terms ahead of what is expected of all pupils of their age.
- Pupils with special educational needs have significantly improved the standards that they reach compared to previous years. School data show that these pupils are currently reaching standards that are expected of all pupils of their age.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and find them interesting. They become very actively involved in learning. This was evident, for example, when a Year 3 class was investigating water.
- Many of the lessons involve giving pupils problems to solve. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils were thoroughly engrossed in solving number problems, with grids and discs. More-able pupils swiftly moved on to using algebra to demonstrate patterns discovered and to solve harder problems.
- Independent learning is encouraged in all classes through the use of discussion, appropriate equipment, technology and classroom displays.
- Some teachers question pupils skilfully. In the Nursery, gentle questioning by an adult allowed a child to solve their own problems during a construction activity. However, too often teachers do not challenge pupils enough through questioning. Some teachers give pupils the answer or do not ask them appropriate questions to make them think harder.
- Good use is made of discussion with adults and other pupils, to share, reinforce and promote learning. In response to good quality teaching, even the youngest children do this well.
- Lessons are well planned and pupils know exactly what they must do. However, some pupils

who could be challenged more by harder work go through activities in lessons that are the same as for all the other pupils. This slows down their progress.

- During lessons, teachers tell the pupils how they could improve their work and challenge them as to what they should do next. This challenge is not seen in books when the piece of work has been completed. Too often when marking, teachers do not correct spellings that are incorrect.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils feel safe. They are very well educated about safety such as e-safety. Numerous visitors come into school and help them to be more knowledgeable about fire, road and water safety. Clubs such as Danger Rangers allow pupils to take calculated risks and be responsible for their own safety while building fires and melting marshmallows.
- Pupils are fully aware of different types of bullying and comment that incidents are rare. They say that any concerns, such as name-calling, are sorted out by adults or peer mediators straight away and do not happen again. Peer mediators are older pupils who undergo effective training and are well respected by other pupils.
- Positive relationships are a strength of the school. Discussion and peer assessment in lessons promote a respect for the views and feelings of others.
- Pupils arrive at school punctually, and attendance is consistently at or above that of other schools nationally.
- Major incidents are logged by senior staff. There are currently no whole-school behavioural strategies. Leaders are in the process of adopting the behavioural system in line with other schools within the academy they are expecting to join.
- Pupils and staff consider that behaviour in the school is good. Of the parents that responded to Parent View, the vast majority consider that the school makes sure the pupils are well behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision and determination to make this an outstanding school. The leadership team and governors share this aspiration.
- The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are rigorous and thorough. All leaders know their school exceptionally well. The rapid identification of some weaknesses, and action taken to improve teaching and learning, demonstrate the ability of the leadership to improve the school further.
- Through a systematic process and the setting of aspiring targets, all teachers are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and how these have a direct effect on the standards pupils reach. This rigorous process has already improved the quality of teaching, particularly for younger pupils.
- All leaders and governors make highly effective use of the school's electronic system to monitor the standards pupils are reaching. Leaders use it successfully to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.
- Some of the senior leadership team are either new to their post or have taken on new responsibilities. Currently they are not fully involved or accountable for these roles and this prevents improvement from being even more rapid.
- Parents are involved in their children's learning and school life through a number of ways. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their Learning Logs (homework books) and how they share their learning at home.
- Leaders and governors are committed to making sure all pupils are interested in learning. Events such as Art Week, residential visits, cooking and a wide range of clubs enhance the daily lessons even further.

- The extensive use of discussion and collaboration throughout the school successfully supports the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school works well in partnership with other schools and with the local authority to improve teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body ensures that all safeguarding requirements are met. The governors are well trained and have undertaken a thorough skills audit to make sure that their skills match the needs of the school. They take an active and very involved part in school life. Time is taken alongside senior leaders in classes and around school to enhance their understanding of the information they are given. They are knowledgeable with regard to school data and development areas. Governors are fully aware of the effectiveness of performance management of teachers and how it has impacted on pupils' learning. Although numbers of pupils eligible for the pupil premium are low, governors are aware of the highly positive effect this funding has had on the progress these pupils have made.

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	108163
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	412329

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrea Farmery
Headteacher	Jacqueline Savage
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2008
Telephone number	01924 303110
Fax number	01924 303111
Email address	headteacher@lofthouse.wakefield.sch.uk

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