

Lunsford Primary School

Swallow Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 6PY

Inspection dates 12–13 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.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress from starting points that are similar to national expectations. When they leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment in English and mathematics is above average.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils are taught the necessary key skills to help them to become successful learners.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and there are excellent relationships at the school. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Regular checks by senior leaders on the quality of teaching ensure that lessons are effective in helping pupils to make good progress.
- The governing body has established a monitoring strategy which makes sure that leadership is effective in maintaining good achievement. Governors are highly effective in asking senior leaders searching questions about pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching.
- Parents provide good support by working well with the school. Pupils' attendance is above average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make outstanding progress in enough lessons. They do not have sufficient opportunities to take make decisions about their work because they are too dependent on adults to tell them what to do.
- The outside area for Early Years Foundation Stage does not give children enough opportunity to discover things for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons to look at the quality of teaching and behaviour and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, subject coordinators for English, history, art, physical education, design and technology and geography, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took place when two classes were on a school journey and inspectors looked at the work done by pupils in these classes over the past year.
- Inspectors took account of the school's own surveys, 69 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the 11 questionnaires from members of staff.
- A range of documentation was reviewed. This included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and the improvement plan; the school's data for tracking of pupils' progress; the work pupils were doing in their books, including those away on the school trip; and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with parents at different times of the school day and took account of three letters from parents.

Inspection team

Neil McDonough, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jill Thewlis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium, the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with a parent in the armed forces, is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs requiring school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is smaller than is found in other schools.
- The school meets the current government floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is one Reception class.
- The headteacher started at the school at Easter 2013 following a period when the school had been led by an interim headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils make outstanding progress in more lessons by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to take decisions for their own learning so they are less reliant on prepared worksheets
 - ensuring that discussions teachers have with pupils about their work helps them consider how they can use their knowledge and understanding to decide how to improve their work.
- Develop the outside learning areas so that:
 - teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage will be able to plan more effective learning opportunities which allow children to explore and find things out for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge, skills and understanding that are normally expected for their age. They make steady progress so they are at the expected level when they start Key Stage 1. The rate of learning then accelerates so that by the time pupils are ready to leave the school their attainment is above the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, which results in above average attainment in writing and mathematics and higher attainment in reading. This prepares them well for developing learning in Key Stage 2 where their progress in each year group is good in all subjects.
- By the end of Year 6, progress is good in English where pupils develop good skills in the use of grammar, punctuation and spelling, and in mathematics they develop good skills in problem solving and make progress which is much better than is found in most other similar schools.
- Good teaching of letters and the sounds they make means that children in Key Stage 1 make a good start in developing their reading skills. Pupils gain good knowledge of the sounds that letters make and this helps them read well throughout the school. As pupils move through the school these early skills are further developed so that, by the time they leave Key Stage 1, reading is much better than in most other schools.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do well in English and mathematics because these pupils are identified early and given the necessary support. Because of additional teaching support, pupils who are eligible for free school meals, who benefit from the pupil premium, have made progress from the previous year and are now one term behind their classmates in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Typically in lessons there are excellent relationships between pupils and teachers and, as a result, pupils listen attentively and respond very quickly to the planned learning tasks. A notable feature of lessons is how well pupils learn from each other through working in groups.
- Teachers know pupils extremely well and ensure that lessons are planned to cater for individual needs. They check on pupils' knowledge and understanding regularly during lessons and, when necessary, they adapt the learning plan to offer greater or less challenge to meet their needs. The quality of work in pupils' books and regular assessments show that pupils have made good progress since the start of the year.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and are successful in deepening pupils' thinking through well targeted questions and encouraging them to develop their answers. When giving answers, pupils' speaking skills are developed well because pupils are expected to give detailed answers to questions using a range of vocabulary.
- Teaching assistants are highly effective across the school in helping different pupils to make good progress with their learning. They work in close cooperation with the teachers to captivate pupils' interest. For example, their support while pupils were acting out an opening scene from *Little Red Riding Hood* helped pupils deepen their understanding of how a play is written.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching helps children to make progress when working in small groups with the teacher and teaching assistants inside the classroom. The children enjoy play activities, but the outside area is not sufficiently interesting or challenging for them to learn by themselves without the direction of the teacher.
- Teachers mark work regularly and this gives pupils clear steps about how to improve. However, with older pupils, teachers' comments are not sufficiently challenging for pupils to think about how they could use the skills they have learnt and their knowledge and understanding of different subjects to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful at all times. Their behaviour and kindness to each other in and around school, in lessons, during assemblies and at playtime show the school to be a caring community. Behaviour is good because governors, school leaders and staff have high expectations at all times.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for by staff. Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Instances of any kind of bullying are extremely rare.
- Pupils develop good attitudes to learning because the quality of work in their books improves as they move through the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and they attend regularly and on time. They enjoy all aspects of school and are eager to learn. The Year 6 'buddies' provide good support for younger children when they first come to school.
- The overwhelming proportion of parents that responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher and other senior leaders have established a clear vision for raising pupils' achievement to higher levels based on strong teamwork to create improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. There are robust checks on how well the school is doing and an improvement plan which focuses on raising pupils' achievements through the continual professional development for teachers.
- Subject leaders check pupils' progress and plan for additional support to ensure pupils are making the required progress. They review teachers' planning to ensure key skills are taught and check pupils' work and discuss the quality of work with class teachers. This has resulted in overall attainment remaining above average at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The school uses the pupil premium fund to employ additional teachers to work with pupils who are eligible for free school meals, either individually or in small teaching groups. All this provides evidence for the school's good processes for equality of opportunity.
- The local authority challenges the school about pupils' achievement and provides an external view about how well the school it is doing. This good support is used alongside the school's own systems for checking the quality of education to make informed and accurate decisions about future improvements.
- In the school's new performance management procedures, teachers are responsible for tracking and measuring pupils' progress and are held to account for the achievement of their pupils. The new arrangements are linked to teachers' pay.
- All of the parents who responded to the on-line survey (Parent View) state that their children are happy at school and that they feel safe. Statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are effectively met. The school's programme for learning is well planned and effective in ensuring pupils make good progress and it supports their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. Pupils are able to make connections between different subjects because the range of subjects offered by the school has been reviewed so that they are taught within a common theme. The school helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe.
- The use of undemanding worksheets in lessons restricts the development of independent learning. The opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to find out things for themselves are restricted because the resources in the outside learning area have yet to be fully developed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear and unambiguous vision, which is shared by all the school, for developing learning. They contribute to the school's checks on its effectiveness, have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and are prominent in

working with the headteacher to prepare an action plan which is focused on developing teaching and learning.

- The quality of teaching is checked rigorously through monitoring visits, regular reports from the headteacher and quality assurance from the local authority. Performance management procedures have been revised and now incorporate the new Teachers' Standards.
 - A governor committee carefully monitors the school's financial resources to ensure these are used effectively to raise achievement. Governors take advantage of training provided by the local authority which gives them a clear understanding of pupils' performance information and ensures they are able to challenge senior leaders by asking searching questions relating to pupils' performance.
 - There is a clear understanding of how the pupil premium is being allocated and the difference this is making for pupils.
 - As part of a strategy for raising achievement, regular visits are arranged for governors to carry out a range monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. Each governor is linked with a class in the school and meets the class teacher regularly to discuss pupil performance. Teachers value these visits because they ensure that there is a team approach to raising achievement. The visits enable governors to have first-hand knowledge about issues relating to achieving good progress for pupils. Governors usefully report back to the headteacher and to the full governing body about their visits to each class.
 - The governing body is very committed to seeing the school improve and supports staff and pupils well at all their social functions. The governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities; all staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.
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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	118516
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	413292

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	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leigh Pearce
Headteacher	Matthew Dechaine
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2008
Telephone number	01732 843352
Fax number	01732 871402
Email address	headteacher@lunsford.kent.sch.uk

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