

The Lincoln Manor Leas Infants School

Hykeham Road, Lincoln, LN6 8BE

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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

- There is a positive atmosphere within the school and all staff work very well together to improve the provision for their pupils.
- There has been a successful drive to improve pupils' standards in English and Mathematics. Attainment in these areas has risen and is now above average.
- Teaching is good with some outstanding features. Teachers plan exciting activities and inspire pupils to become keen readers and writers.
- Questionnaires show that parents have confidence in the school achieving the very best for their children.
- Leaders are skilled at identifying the essential improvements needed to make the school even more effective.
- Pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good. They develop and improve these skills by using them regularly in other subjects.
- The headteacher has a clear vision and high expectations for continued and sustained improvement. The school is well placed to make the next steps to outstanding.
- Recent initiatives to give improved support to those pupils who need extra help with their learning has improved achievement.
- The governing body evaluates its own performance effectively.
- Pupils behave well and are actively involved in their learning. They say they feel safe in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are inconsistent learning challenges for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage which prevent some from achieving their full potential.
- Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not rigorous enough.
- In some lessons teachers do not use the information on pupils' progress and previous achievements to question and challenge them.
- Marking does not always give pupils the next steps in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed twelve lessons, six of which were joint observations with the headteacher. A number of small-group activities were also observed.
- The inspection team talked to pupils in lessons, looked at their books and listened to them read.
- The inspectors had meetings with the senior leadership team, assessment coordinators, subject leaders, Early Years Foundation Stage leader and special-educational-needs coordinator. Meetings were also held with four members of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors took account of a recently conducted parental questionnaire and 35 opinions on the online questionnaire (Parent View). The team also analysed 22 questionnaires completed by school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including school development plans, internal and external progress information, pupils' books, the school's evaluation of its own performance and reports produced by the local authority.
- The team also looked at information on staff performance and records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Alan Giles, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Hughes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Lincoln Manor Leas is a larger-than-average Infant school.
- The school converted to become an academy school in June 2012. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The new headteacher started in September 2012.
- Nearly all pupils are White British and there is a much smaller-than-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. A very small number speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well-below average. The funding is based on the number of looked-after children, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school has accredited awards for Healthy School and Food for Life Partnership.
- The school is part of the Hykeham Learning Network of schools.
- 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 children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - developing consistent provision so that there are more opportunities for children to explore, investigate and solve problems
 - all staff planning together to improve the consistency of learning opportunities for all children
 - having clearer and more rigorous procedures for recording the next steps in children's learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - improving teachers' questioning skills and their marking in books, so that pupils know what the next stages in their learning looks like and to more consistently test their understanding of this.
 - making better use of pupil-progress data to increase the pace and challenge for pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The published test results for the end of KS1 in July 2012 show attainment in reading to be slightly above average, writing average and mathematics above average. Girls out-performed boys in writing.
- Well-directed interventions by leaders, with good support from the local authority, have had a significant impact in raising these standards of attainment.
- Progress has been accelerated across Years 1 and 2 and this year's unpublished national test results show that a significantly greater number of pupils have made better-than-expected progress in English and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence confirms this with more pupils achieving at levels higher than expected for their age. The school has successfully inspired pupils to produce extended writing of a higher calibre. These interventions have also improved boys' writing to be in line with that of girls.
- The most recent Phonic Screening check indicates that Year 1 reading skills are well above those expected nationally, a substantial increase on the 2012 results. The teaching of phonics (letters and associated sounds) is having a significant impact in improving the reading standards and achievements of pupils of all ages.
- Achievement in mathematics continues to be good with a significant proportion of pupils exceeding expected levels of attainment by the end of Year 2. Pupils make rapid progress because they regularly apply their mathematical skills in practical tasks and also use them in other subjects, especially in scientific experiments.
- Achievement in personal, social and emotional development is good in the Reception year. The progress made in other areas of learning is not as good as it could be and children make inconsistent progress across the year.
- The use of strategies to accelerate the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has been a school priority. Knowledgeable staff have successfully boosted the confidence and skill levels of these pupils and the achievement gap, identified in the 2012 results, between these pupils and their peers has now been closed.
- The very small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and pupils that speak English as an additional language make the same progress as their peers.
- Pupil-premium funding has been deployed well. Enriched activities with specially trained support staff, including the use of a newly employed learning mentor, are enabling eligible pupils to make the same levels of progress as their classmates. As a result there are no gaps in attainment by the end of Key Stage 1.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers work exceptionally hard to make lessons fun and make learning more active and practical. In an outstanding Year 1 science lesson pupils excitedly tested the waterproof qualities of different materials. In a Reception class children made good progress using symmetrical dot

patterns on a ladybird to discover halves and doubles of numbers.

- Pupils work very well together and discuss and share their work. They also show maturity when working independently on tasks. They are confident and resilient in their learning and this particularly helps them when solving mathematical problems.
- Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to work with small groups or with one-to-one interventions and pupils benefit greatly from this targeted support.
- The sharing of good practice among staff successfully improves teaching skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage planning is not coordinated enough between staff and there is not an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Assessment of children's achievements is not rigorous enough.
- All staff have very high expectations of the way pupils conduct themselves in school. The way they praise good work and behaviour, in and outside the classrooms, is a major factor in the calmness that is apparent throughout the school.
- New initiatives to track pupil progress and to use the data appropriately are used inconsistently. When used well, pupils who have been identified as falling behind are quickly identified and good support gets them back on track. Similarly, good arrangements have also enabled the more-able pupils to be challenged to achieve their full potential in Years 1 and 2.
- However, the school recognises that further consistency of these practices is needed. Early Years Foundation Stage staff are being challenged to be more rigorous with their practices to observe and record children's learning in order to plan appropriately for the next stages.
- Leaders have identified that some teachers need to increase the pace in lessons by using questions to check pupils' understanding. Marking in books does not consistently give pupils clear instructions on how to achieve the next-stage targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is typically good and no disruptive behaviour was observed at any time during the inspection. School records show this is typical and there have been no serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour in recent times.
- Pupils of all ages are forming very positive relationships and are keen to communicate their ideas and help each other in their explorations and investigations.
- Pupils were keen to talk to the inspection team about their achievements and to show them their work. They talk about enjoying their lessons and how their school visits make learning more fun.
- Pupils were keen to say how everyone gets on with each other and that bullying was not an issue at the school and also that teachers deal well with any personal problems they may have. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Pupils respond positively to the requests from their teachers to collaborate in pairs and small groups and to read and assess each other's work. This has been a focus of school improvement

and has successfully developed pupils' practical and investigative skills and is a real strength of the school.

- On rare occasions, when there is too much teacher-led instruction, pupils become restless and lose their concentration and motivation to work.
- The vast majority of parents that talked to the inspectors, or expressed their views through Parent View or the school's own questionnaire, believe their children feel safe at school and behave well.
- Present attendance figures do not reflect pupils' enthusiasm for learning and remain just below average. The school has worked hard to improve communication with parents and outside agencies, especially by taking a firmer stance on requests for holidays in term time.

The leadership and management are good

- Since her appointment in 2012, the headteacher has provided inspirational leadership. She has made a swift and accurate analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and her leadership has created a very strong team-spirit among all staff.
- Staff morale is high because the school development plan for 2012-2013 was jointly developed and trialled. Good evaluations of newly developed practices by all staff are making sure that improved pupil achievement is being sustained.
- The headteacher has supported staff to improve their subject leadership roles and skills. They have been actively involved in checking how well developments are working in their areas.
- Strongly focused measures to improve literacy across the school have proved highly successful in improving teaching skills and raising reading and writing standards.
- The special-educational-needs coordinator has significantly improved provision for those pupils who need additional help. She has built strong relationships with parents and external agencies to increase levels of support. The tracking of pupils who need further support in the Reception class is not as well developed as procedures in Years 1 and 2.
- The school has developed strong links with its external partners. The local authority education adviser and Early Years Foundation team have been effective in supporting changes to practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage and also in checking outcomes over the last year.
- Joint activities with the Hykeham Learning Network, such as shared staff training and assessing standards of pupils' work together, are enhancing opportunities for pupils.
- Relevant training and support is beginning to increase the effectiveness of leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Significant financial investment to improve outdoor learning provision is also beginning to have a positive impact.
- Pupils talk about the exciting way they are taught different subjects and how this helps them to improve their writing, reading and mathematical skills. This was observed in pupils' understanding of measuring and capacity in a science lesson and a recent visit to the seaside inspired pupils' creative writing. The school gives all pupils equal opportunities.

- Curriculum enrichment activities and additional after-school clubs enable pupils to experience and develop skills and understanding in a wide range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural contexts.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has worked very effectively with the new headteacher to contribute significantly to the recent changes made in the school.
- Governors support developments well because of their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They understand performance data and know about the quality of teaching.
- They are effectively led by a newly appointed Chair of Governors and are motivated to improve their work by using well-structured development plans.
- The development plan enables the governing body to be aware of future needs and this is an integral part of the overall plan to move the school towards becoming outstanding.
- Governors are overseeing the arrangements for spending the pupil premium. They are well informed about the impact this has on pupils' achievement.
- They have a good set of skills and experience to manage the performance of leaders and teachers. They understand that the aspirational targets set for all pupils have been fundamental to improvement and they compare recent results to national expectations. They know what the school is doing to reward good teachers and tackle any underperformance.
- Governors make sure that that all safeguarding arrangements meet current national requirements.

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	138149
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	412604

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Smithers
Headteacher	Jacqui Kirwan
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01522 681810
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