

Littlecoates Primary School

Harlow Street, Grimsby, Lincolnshire, DN31 2QX

Inspection dates 17–18 July 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 school benefits considerably from the exceptionally strong leadership of the new headteacher and her continuous and relentless drive for improvement during a period of significant change. She is well supported by staff and governors.
- Most pupils achieve well from their below average starting points and reach expected standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The concerted effort by all leaders and managers to improve the quality of teaching by providing high quality training coupled with a rigorous cycle of checks on teaching and pupils' progress has been successful. Teaching is now typically good with some outstanding practice.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported very effectively. Consequently, their behaviour improves and as a result they make faster progress.
- The needs of all the pupils are quickly identified, especially pupils with special educational needs. They are supported well and make good progress.
- Governors know the school well. They are aware of its strengths and provide a good balance to support and challenge.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding because less effective teachers do not consistently use information on pupils' progress in class to better meet their needs.
- Marking does not always provide clear guidance on how to improve, particularly outside English and maths lessons. Where next steps for improvement are given, pupils do not always have the opportunity to act upon this guidance.
- Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to learn independently or work on their English and mathematics targets in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons of which three were joint lesson observations with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific literacy intervention for some targeted pupils.
- The inspectors also listened to pupils in Years 1, 3, 4 and 6 read to them.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the headteacher, other senior leaders, teachers and a local authority representative. The lead inspector met with the full governing body.
- The inspectors took account of 14 responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own analysis of parental views. They also analysed 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation including the school's own information on pupils' current attainment and progress, the school's evaluation of its performance, improvement plans, safeguarding and behaviour policies and records and documentation relating to teachers' performance over time.

Inspection team

Mark Colley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Andrew Clark	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- More pupils than usual join the school after the start of Nursery or leave before the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher has been in post for less than two years, the deputy headteacher less than a term and there has been a total turn-over of teaching staff in the past two years. The vast majority of governors are also new to their posts.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to accelerate pupils' achievement further by:
 - ensuring teachers always act and respond to pupils' progress in class by providing increased challenge and support
 - ensuring teachers' marking consistently identifies how pupils can improve further and provides clear opportunities for pupils to act on this
 - giving pupils greater skills for independence through more opportunity to manage and lead their own learning
 - ensuring pupils have a broader range of opportunities to embed key literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the nursery with skills and aptitudes that are often well below those typical of this age. Whatever their starting points, pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average.
- Children learn well in Nursery and Reception classes. Staff work closely with parents to provide work that builds on children's previous experience and interests. As a result of good teaching, by the end of Reception children's attainment is closer to but still below the levels expected.
- Improvements in the way pupils are taught how to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics), combined with a substantial investment in high quality training for teachers, have been effective in raising reading standards. The percentage of pupils meeting national expectations in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below average in 2012 but results submitted for the current year indicate this is set to improve significantly.
- Pupils of all abilities who read to inspectors were enthusiastic and showed high levels of skill when reading unfamiliar words. Older pupils were increasingly fluent and expressive.
- Inspection evidence, supported by current school data, shows that in Years 1 to 6 all groups of pupils including those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress to achieve standards broadly in line with expectations. This happens because the school has set challenging targets for their progress and staff make sure they are meeting them through providing good quality extra help.
- A significant proportion of the pupils in Year 6 currently, joined the school during the last two years. This alongside a number of changes of teachers has affected the picture of achievement in the year group. The school makes sure that those who join the school late are supported to achieve their best.
- The pupil premium is used to offer one-to-one and group tuition, reading support and other extra help for those eligible for the funding. The school's tracking data show that this is having a positive impact upon the achievement of these pupils. In 2012 they were six months behind their classmates in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Most recent progress data show that the gaps between the groups of pupils in school have closed and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding now achieve in line with classmates.

The quality of teaching is good

- Very strong systems to support and improve teaching have helped to ensure that it is of good quality despite the many changes in staffing. Pupils and their parents rightly agree that the teaching encourages good progress.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes children are helped in pursuing activities of their own choice as well as those directed by adults. They enjoy literacy work and have good opportunities to use and apply their developing numeracy skills. This was seen in an outdoor session where children worked together to record the results of scooter races around the playground. Children showed confidence and enthusiasm writing numbers on different charts and completing simple calculations.
- Teachers have good relationships with pupils and provide a positive atmosphere for learning in lessons. Most have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Consequently, pupils respond readily to tasks with interest and enthusiasm.
- Much is expected of those pupils who have difficulty learning. Well thought-out support ensures that these pupils are given the help they need. Teaching assistants ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included and able to make good progress.
- Staff consistently monitor how well pupils are learning throughout lessons with effective questioning and discussions around their work. Although they swiftly correct errors and provide extra support for those pupils who find the task difficult, they are less consistent in adjusting activities for pupils who are learning quickly which limits their progress.
- Teachers closely monitor the progress pupils make across the year and use this to plan and

teach lessons that better meet the needs of all pupils. Frequent discussions with leaders in school help teachers to address the needs of pupils that may be struggling to make progress.

- In the small number of lessons where outstanding teaching was observed, teachers ensured pupils had good opportunity to work in pairs and small groups to discuss and reflect on their learning. This helped pupils lead their own learning and develop strong independence skills, making learning more relevant, exiting and accelerating progress. These aspects were lacking in the weakest lessons observed.
- Marking is not yet consistent across the school. In the best examples marking is diagnostic and formative which moves pupils on to the next steps in their learning. Pupils have opportunities to mark their own and other's work and respond to comments made by their teachers. However, this is not always the case in every class.
- Marking is strongest within English and mathematics. Marking in books outside these subjects does not consistently help pupils to focus on the weaker areas of their writing and numeracy.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The many new staff members have quickly established harmonious and supportive relationships at all levels and pupils and staff are rightly proud of their care for each other.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and visitors and respect each other's views. They enjoy the opportunity to share and to talk about their work.
- Pupils' hard work, good attitudes and behaviour lead to their good progress and improved standards. Pupils talk excitedly about the range of visits, clubs and opportunities offered.
- Pupils are well aware of different forms of bullying including cyber-bullying and know what to do if any should occur. They say that incidents of bullying are rare and were confident that, if any such incidents occurred, they would be dealt with very effectively by adults.
- Pupils, staff and parents agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils sometimes join the school with difficulties in behaving appropriately. A combination of systematic identification of the best way forward, staff vigilance and the school's highly supportive ethos ensures that these pupils soon understand what is expected of them and their behaviour invariably improves.
- Attendance has improved this year and is now average; the school makes extensive efforts to support those pupils whose attendance falls below what is expected.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, despite the significant changes in staffing, has successfully established strong leadership at all levels. All staff within their leadership roles are ambitious and are successfully driving improvement. The headteacher has taken decisive and successful action to eradicate weak teaching. Consequently, teaching has improved vastly and standards of achievement have risen over the past year.
- All teachers are closely held to account for meeting targets and for the progress of pupils. Half-termly meetings held by leaders are helping to maintain high expectations and to make changes if any pupils are underachieving.
- Very supportive and challenging systems in place to performance manage teaching and provide well-considered training have helped ensure that, despite the many staff changes, teaching is good and continues to improve.
- A good range of creative activities and visits enrich pupils' learning experiences. Effective links between different subjects and events in school extend pupils' knowledge of the world and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Self-evaluation is robust and the school's actions are carefully planned, concerted and very effective. The involvement of all staff in the monitoring and evaluating of school improvement actions is accelerating the pace of improvement and means the school has good capacity to improve this further.

- Morale is high and team spirit among staff is strong. As a result, teaching and non-teaching staff work together as a cohesive team ambitious for the pupils' success. This positive climate helps leaders to ensure that teachers, such as newly qualified teachers, are constantly improving and are very well supported. The local authority rightly judges this school to be 'self improving' and as such it has provided 'light touch' support.
- The school has close relationships with its parents and carers which extend beyond what is expected of a school as the welfare of pupils and families is very important to the headteacher and her staff. They appreciate the regular information they receive in newsletters and pupil reports. There are ample opportunities for meetings to discuss their children's' progress and agree individual targets with class teachers. Parents and carers are very happy with the school.
- All safeguarding requirements are met fully. Policies and procedures to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of pupils are robust and these are checked regularly.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors, many of them new to school make sure that all statutory duties, including safeguarding are fulfilled effectively. They identify development needs accurately and make sure that all resources, including staff and the pupil premium, are effective in raising achievement. They aim to provide the very best opportunities for all pupils to achieve high standards, and measure effectiveness in terms of standards achieved. Governors understand their role and continue to undertake training so that they can challenge school leaders and hold the school to account. They check the quality of teaching against pupil progress and this leads to well-focused plans for further improvement. They challenge staff effectively through a well-developed system of managing teachers' performance and its link with salary progression. Governors know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance.

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	117964
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	412321

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	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lin McClellan
Headteacher	Rosalind Smith
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2009
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