

Leighton Primary School

Orton Malborne, Peterborough, PE2 5PL

Inspection dates 16–17 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although achievement has improved this year, too few pupils are making good progress.
- Some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching are preventing it from being good overall.
- Lessons do not always build on what pupils already know and are able to do. Sometimes different groups of pupils do not receive enough help and guidance.
- The pupils' work in mathematics is not always marked in a way that helps them to improve it. Occasionally, more-able pupils are not given sufficiently hard work.
- Leaders' checking of the quality of teaching is not incisive enough to ensure that it continues to improve quickly.
- The governors and senior leaders are now successfully guiding a recovery in the school's performance following a sharp fall in pupils' achievement after the last inspection. However, their plans for improvement are not sufficiently sharply focused to make sure that the school continues to improve rapidly.
- The spending of the pupil premium is not checked to find out how well it is making a difference to the progress of eligible pupils.
- Some parents are not as involved in their child's learning as they could be.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders are ambitious and have generated a strong team approach. Recent improvements in teaching illustrate well the school's capacity to improve further.
- The rate of pupils' progress has increased this year and results have risen in the 2013 national tests in both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Children in the Reception class do well. There are good arrangements to help the youngest children find out about school life before they start school.
- Most pupils behave very well, and pupils say they feel safe at school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 25 lessons. In addition, they visited some classes to look at how pupils who need extra help are supported, and also to listen to pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in lessons, and met with two groups of pupils to find out their views of the school.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement and policies about keeping pupils safe. The team also examined the work in some pupils' books and a range of data about their progress.
- The inspectors held discussions with pupils, teachers, the senior leadership team, the leader responsible for special educational needs, and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector also met a representative of the local authority.
- There were 24 responses to the Parent View website questionnaire. The inspectors also took account of comments made by parents to whom they spoke during the inspection and at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in 55 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

Christopher Parker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Tabberer

Additional Inspector

Christine Murrell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than most primary schools.
- About two thirds of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The rest of the school population is made up of pupils from a range of backgrounds, the largest of which is categorised as Other White.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action (pupils who need extra support with their learning) is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium additional funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is almost double the national average.
- The school provides specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This unit accommodates up to four pupils who have particular autistic difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the school was last inspected there have been many changes of staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The governing body has also had several changes of personnel this year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so more pupils make good progress by:
 - ensuring that the work the teachers set for pupils always builds on what they know and are able to do, and is hard enough to make the more able think carefully, particularly in mathematics
 - providing effective guidance and support to all groups during lessons, so they all make rapid progress
 - marking pupils' work in mathematics in a way that shows them clearly what they need to do to make rapid progress.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - focusing sharply on the impact of the quality of teaching on pupils' learning and progress when observing lessons
 - adding clearer criteria to the school development plan against which success can be measured at key intervals, so its impact can be more frequently and incisively evaluated
 - making sure that leaders and governors review the spending of pupil premium funding by sharply evaluating its impact on the progress of eligible pupils.
- Give parents more opportunities to be involved in their child's learning, and encourage them to do so.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement has improved this year. Most pupils are now making the progress expected of them. However, not enough pupils are making progress at a faster rate to reach higher standards. Not all groups are doing as well they could because although teaching has improved, it is not yet consistently good.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics has increased this year, but the more-able pupils are not always challenged enough. In addition, marking and the feedback given to the pupils in mathematics are not as helpful as they are in writing, and pupils do not always respond to their teacher's comments.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making progress in line with other groups of pupils, and some individuals are benefiting considerably from the support they receive. In some year groups, school data show that pupils supported at 'school action plus' are not making as much progress as other groups.
- The very small number of pupils who attend the specially resourced provision are well supported and make good gains because of the one-to-one support given by staff, who understand each pupil's needs. Programmes of work are carefully devised and taught. Their behaviour is very thoughtfully and sensitively managed.
- The children start school with skills that are less well developed than those expected for their age. They do well in the Reception Year, and many reach the goals set for them. However, almost half of the children do not reach these goals in literacy, and a third do not reach them in mathematics.
- Progress in Year 2 is considerably faster than in Year 1. Nevertheless, the results of national tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have been broadly average for the last few years. They are higher this year than they were in 2012, reflecting the faster progress made by the pupils.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 dipped sharply in 2011 to well below average. It has improved over the last two years as pupils have made better progress, and this year it is broadly average in writing and mathematics. Attainment has not recovered quite as well in reading but progress is accelerating throughout the school.
- In 2012, Year 6 pupils who were supported by the pupil premium left the school about six months behind their classmates in English, and nearly a year behind them in mathematics. This year eligible pupils in Year 6 have made faster progress than their classmates, with the result that the gap is closing. However, this not the case in other years.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although many lessons are well structured, and are often interesting and engaging for the pupils, teaching does not yet result in pupils making good progress in the longer term. The recent focus on improving the quality of teaching has resulted in approaches that give pupils a clearer understanding of what they need to do to be successful in the lesson.
- Lessons are not always planned to ensure that the work builds on what pupils already know and

are able to do. There are occasions when, for example, one group of pupils within a class is not given sufficient guidance and support, and consequently does not make as much progress as other groups.

- The marking of pupils' work, and guidance on how to improve it, is not as effective in mathematics as it is in writing. The information that the pupils are given to improve their writing is clear, and helpfully guides them on what they need to do next. This has been instrumental in raising standards in writing. Feedback is not as detailed in mathematics.
- Teachers are using a broad range of approaches to teaching mathematics, and increasingly setting problems in lifelike contexts. In an interesting mathematics lesson in Year 6, centred on designing and budgeting for a new theme park, many pupils made good progress, but the more able were not stretched as much as they could have been.
- Teaching assistants provide a wide range of individual and group teaching for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those supported by the pupil premium. Much has a positive impact on pupils' learning, but progress within these groups is not as fast in some year groups as in others because support is not always directed where it is most needed.
- Throughout the school there is a growing level of consistency in the quality of teaching, resulting from the work of senior and 'phase' leaders. Working with their teams, they have raised expectations among the teachers that all pupils should make good progress. Teachers who lead phases and subjects are increasingly effective in improving the quality of teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most pupils behave very well in lessons. Occasional low-level interruptions are usually dealt with promptly. Pupils are very aware of the sanctions should they misbehave, and were very excited to participate in the 'token day', where the teachers had prepared a range of games and activities around a 'beach' theme. This was a reward for good behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy school. The oldest pupils say they will be 'sad to leave'. They were very clear about the steps that have been taken to improve the school, and how their progress had increased over the last two terms as a result of the steps taken by their teachers. Positive values and a very caring ethos permeate school life.
- A few parents did not agree that the school deals with bullying well. In discussion with pupils, they say that they have very few concerns about bullying or their safety. They are also very confident that an adult will act very quickly to 'sort out' any poor behaviour. Pupils clearly understand the impact of unkind name-calling and say it is 'not tolerated'.
- The school takes a range of steps to make sure that the pupils attend school regularly. The school takes robust measures where a few pupils do not attend as often as they should. As a result, attendance is improving and is broadly average. Punctuality is also strongly promoted, and late arrival at school is followed up with parents.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher carries out checks on the quality of teaching. These observations have raised the quality of teaching this year, but are not yet incisive enough to help teachers ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. This is because they do not focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress.

- The deputy headteacher carefully tracks the progress of all groups of pupils. Her detailed analysis of this year's results shows that there have been improvements in the progress made by many, but not all, groups of pupils. However, there is little evaluation, for example, of how well pupils make progress when taught in groups, to ascertain which approaches are most effective.
- The pupil premium is predominantly used to provide support for pupils' social development and extra teaching to increase their rates of progress. While this funding is having a beneficial impact for pupils in general, it is not used precisely enough for just the pupils intended, and its impact on the progress of eligible pupils is not evaluated in sufficient detail.
- The targets set for teachers' performance are now well focused on the school's priorities to improve the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress. The 'appraisal' system for checking and improving their work also takes full account of the training needs of each member of staff. Staff pay rises and promotions are linked appropriately to their performance.
- The school development plan rightly sets out a range of actions that are aimed at improving achievement in English and mathematics. However, the criteria against which the headteacher and governors can evaluate success at frequent intervals are not precise enough. While the plan has funds allocated to each activity, value for money is not evaluated in detail.
- The school provides parents with a range of useful information, although its website does not contain all the information it should. Attendance at parents' evenings and events such as musical performances is high. However, the school is less successful in engaging some parents in their child's learning.
- The school places a heavy emphasis on the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. The sounds that letters make are taught systematically to provide pupils with a secure foundation for reading and writing. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through an interesting range of themes and topics.
- The local authority has had a strong influence on the work of the school over the last year. A review of the school's work and a range of support have removed some barriers to improvement. An effective partnership between the school and its improvement adviser has instigated and supported improved teaching and better learning for pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has undergone many changes of personnel recently and is being supported by the Chair from another school. It has reviewed many of its practices. The Chair of the Governing Body has established the information that governors need, in a succinct form, to check how well the school is doing.
 - The Vice-Chair keeps a keen eye on the budget, so the school operates within its means. While governors have reviewed what the pupil premium is spent on, they have yet to evaluate its impact on the achievement of pupils who are eligible for the additional support. Similarly, the impact of spending on school improvement activities is not evaluated.
 - Governors visit the school, so they can assess for themselves how well it is doing. They now receive regular reviews of the quality of teaching and have had training from the local authority to enable them to make greater use of data showing how well pupils are performing.
 - Governors set targets for the headteacher and assure themselves that the teachers' performance is managed appropriately. They ensure that any increases in teachers' pay are linked to their performance. Governors check that the arrangements to keep pupils as safe as possible are up to date and 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	110743
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	411965

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	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Farrelly
Headteacher	Hayley Sutton
Date of previous school inspection	20 April 2010
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