

# Lawn Primary School

Norbury Close, Allestree, Derby, DE22 2QR

**Inspection dates** 6–7 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Teaching has not been consistently good enough over time to ensure pupils achieve well across the school, especially in Key Stage 2. Teachers do not always plan work well or use time effectively.
- Some tasks in mathematics lessons do not provide sufficient challenge for more-able pupils.
- Sometimes pupils are not given enough good guidance to enable them to make brisk progress in lessons. Some teachers use marking and verbal feedback well to guide pupils, but this is not consistent across the school.
- By the end of Year 6, not enough pupils make good progress in mathematics.
- The new system for tracking pupils' progress and raising expectations for their performance is not firmly established.
- Ongoing changes to leaders and staff at all levels, including changes in key roles and responsibilities and the current restructuring of the workforce have hampered the school's efforts to drive improvement quickly.
- Governors do not make the best use of their visits or all available data to check pupils' learning or the impact of school development planning.

### The school has the following strengths

- Most pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 make good progress.
- Progress is improving in Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 in writing is considerably higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is above average. They feel safe in school and mostly behave well.
- The acting headteacher, governors and local authority personnel are working effectively in partnership to ensure pupils' education is not disrupted by the current staffing difficulties.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 19 lessons taught by 16 teachers and/or teaching assistants. Three of these lessons were observed together with the acting headteacher or one of the assistant headteachers.
- Samples of pupils' work from the previous school year and this year were analysed. An inspector listened to a few Year 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 38 questionnaires completed by staff, a small number of letters from parents and the 71 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Responses to the school's own recent surveys of parents' and pupils' views were also considered. An inspector spoke informally to some parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils' books; monitoring records; various improvement plans; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Cleo Adediran	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Buckingham	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The remaining pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds but no pupil is currently at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for certain groups such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, is low.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or a statement of special educational needs are well below average.
- The headteacher has been on long-term sick leave since June 2013. In her place, the deputy headteacher has taken on the role of acting headteacher.
- Just over one quarter of the teaching staff joined the school in September 2013.
- The school hosts a nursery and before- and after-school clubs, but these are privately run and inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching consistently good or better so that pupils make faster progress, especially in Key Stage 2, by ensuring all teachers:
  - plan work carefully and use time in lessons well to enable all pupils to learn at a brisk pace
  - practise new ideas and methods well with pupils and guide the work they do on their own effectively
  - share the existing good practice in marking and verbal feedback to support pupils' learning
  - always give more-able pupils challenging work in mathematics lessons.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the current restructuring of staffing and changes in key roles and responsibilities are completed urgently so that all staff can contribute fully to checking the school's effectiveness and driving improvements
  - the new tracking system is fully established so leaders know exactly how well pupils are performing and can raise expectations for what they can achieve
  - governors make good use of their visits and performance data to check up on pupils' learning and the effectiveness of school development planning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils join Year 1 with above-average attainment; for some pupils standards are well above expected levels for their age. These levels are maintained to the end of Year 6, but pupils should be doing better and their progress is more consistent in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2.
- The proportions of pupils in Year 6 in 2013 who made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics compared favourably with national averages. The proportions who exceeded expected progress compared well in writing but lagged behind in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 in mathematics was in line with the national average. Attainment in this subject was lower than in previous years.
- While pupils' progress overall is improving in Key Stage 2, there are variations in the rates of progress between year groups and subjects.
- Pupils' attainment in writing in Key Stage 2 has risen since the previous inspection. Most pupils present their work neatly and write well. More-able pupils have a wide range of expressive language at their finger-tips and readily consult thesauruses to embellish and edit their accounts.
- This year, assessments show that children joined Reception with skills and aptitudes which were typical for this age group. In previous years, children's levels of skills and aptitudes were considerably higher. Children make good progress over the year.
- Most Year 2 pupils achieve well. Pupils who need extra help to develop their reading skills confidently blend sounds, and this enables them to tackle the pronunciation of unknown words securely. However, results at the higher Level 3 in mathematics in 2013 show that the most able pupils were not all doing as well as they could.
- The very few disabled pupils and those who had special educational needs in Year 6 in 2013 achieved well.
- The very few pupils in Year 6 known to be eligible for the pupil premium also achieved well, and their overall attainment was higher than that of similar pupils nationally. They attained similarly to that of other pupils in the year group in English, although on average they were almost one year behind their classmates in mathematics.

### The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across year groups. Typically it ranges from requiring improvement to good. It is most effective in Reception and in Years 2 and 5. Discontinuity in staffing has hampered the sharing of best practice in teaching, including in marking and the use of verbal feedback.
- In some lessons teachers do not make good use of what pupils know and can do to match work to the needs of all groups. Tasks are sometimes not organised well enough to extend pupils' learning, especially for the most able. This often affects pupils' progress in mathematics lessons. Their calculation skills are secure but too much time is sometimes spent on mundane activities that restrict opportunities for pupils to work independently and apply their knowledge productively.

- Teachers do not always demonstrate new ideas to pupils effectively or provide them with sufficient guidance or resources to help them make good progress when they work on their own. On these occasions, some pupils are not clear about how to organise their ideas.
- Marking is not sufficiently consistent in quality across year groups to ensure all pupils receive the help they need to achieve well.
- When lessons proceed at a brisk pace, teachers make expert use of information on pupils' levels of attainment to plan lessons carefully and to check and review learning. They practise new ideas and methods with the class quickly. They ensure pupils know what they have to do and provide them with the right amount of support to help them apply their skills confidently in their independent tasks.
- Writing skills are usually taught well. Video clips, lively topics and 'quirky' poems are carefully chosen to spark and sustain pupils' interest. Pupils make good use of this stimulus material to construct their accounts and to practise and extend their range of descriptive vocabulary.
- In most lessons teachers work closely with teaching assistants, who support disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and less-able pupils effectively. Teaching assistants direct these pupils' learning well, question them closely and ensure they are well prepared to take a full part in lesson activities.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Children settle well in Reception. They are respectful to staff and are quick to include others in their activities without adult prompting. They comment approvingly on each other's work and show initiative, for example by helping each other out when putting on their coats.
- Children are keen to learn, select activities for themselves and stay focused when tasks require high levels of concentration, such as threading leaves onto twigs.
- In most lessons pupils interact well with each other to practise, check and discuss their learning.
- Nearly all pupils say that they are happy at school and like it because staff are friendly and caring and they enjoy the wide range of activities. Their attendance is consistently above average. They report that the large majority of pupils get on well with each other, although on a few occasions learning is slowed when a small minority of pupils disrupt the lesson.
- Responses to the pupils' questionnaire show that most pupils strongly approve of the incentives, such as 'golden time', and sanctions which were introduced last year to encourage good behaviour. There have been no exclusions in the last three years.
- Pupils enjoy each other's company, share ideas readily and play well with each other. They appreciate the contribution of Year 6 'buddies', and 'playworkers' at lunchtime, in helping them to feel safe and to join in activities. Pupils have useful opportunities to contribute responsibly to school life as councillors and team captains.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They recall messages given during 'anti-bullying' weeks and put them into practice if required. They know about cyber-bullying and what to do if it happens to them.

**The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Significant changes in staffing, including at leadership level, have hampered the school's efforts to drive improvement quickly since the previous inspection. Staff restructuring and changes in key roles and responsibilities are currently underway and this, together with the continuing absence of the headteacher, has created a climate of uncertainty among the workforce and parents.
- Several staff are too new to teaching or to the school to have acquired the necessary experience to undertake leadership roles. Other staff have been appointed recently to a key subject leadership role, and while they have good ideas to develop their subject, they have not monitored teaching and learning within it.
- Leaders have adopted a new, improved tracking system this term to monitor pupils' progress. The previous system did not enable leaders to measure accurately pupils' starting points in Year 1 or sharply focus staff on ensuring pupils had made good progress by the end of Year 6.
- Leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching across the school, which are partly based on the information provided by the previous tracking system, are over-optimistic. Some gains have been made, for example in improving the presentation of pupils' work, but consistency in practice has not been ensured.
- Much of the responsibility for directing the school's work currently falls on the shoulders of the acting headteacher and one of the assistant headteachers. They are doing an effective job. The acting headteacher enjoys the confidence of parents and staff and this has been an important factor in sustaining morale.
- Leaders pay due regard to the well-being of all groups of pupils to ensure there is no discrimination. Measures are firmly established to support vulnerable pupils, including a 'nurture' group. While actions taken to support pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium previously concentrated on their social development, new plans are firmly focused on accelerating these pupils' academic progress.
- A wide range of activities beyond lessons, including residential visits, talent shows, charity fundraising and class-led assemblies promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The local authority has provided the governing body and the senior leadership team with very effective support to help them manage the current restructuring process and discontinuity in leadership.
- The recent national sports funding for primary schools has been spent suitably, for example on specialist coaching, to enhance pupils' physical skills and well-being. The school has appropriate plans to check on its impact.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has undergone considerable changes of leadership and personnel in the last two years. In the past governors have not been well enough informed about the school's performance to enable them to hold leaders rigorously to account.
  - The new leaders of the governing body understand the use and purposes of data, but do not take sufficient account of national comparisons when judging pupils' performance in Key Stage 2. Governors' visits are not sharply focused on monitoring the quality of pupils' learning or the

effectiveness of school development planning.

- New leaders are working well with the local authority to support the school’s acting headteacher, for example by arranging support from another headteacher in the local authority. Governors are ambitious for the school’s success.
- They know how and why pupil premium funding is spent in particular ways, and examine with senior leaders its impact on the achievement and well-being of eligible pupils.
- Governors review closely the headteacher’s performance. They ensure that appropriate procedures are followed for staff pay rises and promotion.
- They make sure the school’s systems for safeguarding pupils are secure and meet current national requirements. Thorough checks are made before new staff are recruited.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112779
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	424975

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	414
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Debbie Haynes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Allison (acting headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 550178
<b>Fax number</b>	01332 550178
<b>Email address</b>	admin@lawn.derby.sch.uk

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