

Luddenham School

Luddenham, Faversham, Kent, ME13 0TE

Inspection dates

25–26 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	2
	This inspection:	Good	
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.

- Overall, teaching is good. Pupils enjoy their learning and most achieve well. Pupils learn well because of teachers' high expectations of learning and good subject knowledge.
- Since the new school has opened, pupils' attainment has remained above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make good progress, especially in mathematics.
- The school provides very good care and support for pupils. They have a strong sense of belonging. Most pupils love their school and are conscientious about making a positive contribution to it.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils feel safe in school. They are kind to each other and respectful to staff.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and pupils have many opportunities to take part in artistic, sporting and musical activities.
- The dedicated headteacher and other senior leaders are committed to providing the best education for the community. Their vision to make the school outstanding is shared by the whole staff and morale is high.
- Governors have a thorough knowledge of the school's work and play an effective part in school development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress that a few pupils, mainly boys, make in writing is not as strong as it is in reading and mathematics.
- Not enough teaching over time is outstanding.
- The quality of marking is too variable and pupils do not get enough opportunities to act upon the advice given by their teachers.
- The level of challenge in lessons does not always meet the needs of the most able pupils, especially the boys in writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. Six of the lessons were carried out jointly with the headteacher and head of school.
- The inspection team talked with pupils about their learning experiences at school and listened to pupils read. They examined work in pupils' exercise books in a range of subjects and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- Meetings were held with key leaders and three members of the school's governing body.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation including plans for what the pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's use of the sports and pupil premium funding, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how well pupils' learning is checked and tracked, and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The inspectors took account of the 66 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), spoke with parents at the end of the school day and analysed 19 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Gianni Bianchi, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Saltmarsh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary academy.
- Luddenham School converted to become an academy on 1 April 2012. When its predecessor school, Luddenham Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or for whom English is not their first language are represented in very low numbers.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents serving in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and supported by school action is above average. The number supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher works three days a week and is supported by the head of school who leads the school on the other two days.
- There are seven classes, one class in each year group from Reception to Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and ensure that boys make better rates of progress in writing across Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils, especially boys, are promptly moved on to more challenging tasks when they have grasped a concept or skill
 - routinely giving pupils time in lessons to act upon the advice given in their teachers' marking.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to the Reception class, children's skills are broadly at the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Good teaching and well established routines help the children make good progress and they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Since the new school opened, the levels that pupils attain in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been well above the national average.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is particularly fast and above national averages. This is because of teachers' good subject knowledge and the level of challenge teachers provide for pupils.
- A few more able pupils, mainly boys, make slower progress in writing than they do in reading and mathematics and this is why achievement is not outstanding.
- Daily phonics (the sounds that letters make) sessions are taught well and those pupils who do not achieve the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check receive good support in Year 2 which allows them to catch up. Pupils who read to the inspectors demonstrated fluent and expressive reading and good understanding.
- In the 2013 end of Year 6 tests, the gap in attainment between the small number of pupils eligible for support provided by the pupil premium funding and other pupils in the school was successfully closed in reading and writing. Compared to their classmates, they also made similar progress from their different starting points in reading and writing.
- However, eligible pupils lag behind their peers by about four terms in mathematics. Senior leaders recognised this and these pupils receive regular and carefully-tailored specialist support, resulting in current pupils making faster rates of progress and attaining levels closer to those of their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make fast progress across the school. This is because the school identifies and meets their individual needs well.
- The level of presentation in pupils' work books shows that pupils take pride in their achievements.
- The typically good achievement of pupils in English and mathematics means that pupils are well prepared for secondary education. This includes the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils whose first language is not English.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching across the school is consistently good and is the main reason for the high standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. However, it has not yet led to fast enough progress being made by a few pupils in writing and this is why teaching is not outstanding.
- Work in current pupils' books, particularly those of the most able, is of a high standard. Teachers have high expectations of learning and encourage pupils to persevere with challenges and achieve the very best they can.
- In the stronger lessons, teachers skilfully use questioning to check and develop pupils' understanding. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher quickly picked up and addressed pupils' confusion about grouping data so that the pupils could successfully get on with the next task and make quicker progress.
- Classrooms are tidy. Displays include much helpful advice that pupils make good use of. They are also a celebration of pupils' achievement.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and support learning well. They make sure the pupils they support know how to improve their work.
- Sometimes when writing, pupils are not always moved on to more challenging tasks quickly enough in order to extend and deepen their learning and make the progress that they are

capable of. This is particularly true for the most able boys.

- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work, but the quality varies across year groups. Inspectors looked at some excellent Year 4 writing books. Pupils were able to explain how they used the advice given in their teachers' marking and how this helped them to improve their work. This results in accelerated progress in this year group and does not happen yet consistently throughout the school.
- All pupils spoken to by the inspectors enjoyed their learning.
- All pupils and the majority of parents who offered an opinion said that teaching was good.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have high expectations of their own behaviour and this contributes to the good achievements they make.
- Luddenham School has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Pupils' behaviour in class and around school is very good and pupils are courteous and considerate to each other. They are eager to learn and listen attentively to teachers' instructions.
- Relationships between pupils and adults and amongst pupils themselves are very good. Pupils listen to each other and to staff very well.
- The school's management of pupils' behaviour is effective. The inspectors did not witness any low-level disruption in the school.
- The behaviour of pupils is not outstanding because, in some lessons where pupils are not challenged quickly enough to deepen their understanding, they begin to fidget, become less interested and rates of progress slow.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and feel very safe at school. Pupils feel confident in lessons to offer ideas and share their learning with each other in an atmosphere free from discrimination and without fear of making a mistake.
- They understand the different forms of bullying, including how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare and if it occurs they feel confident that their teachers will help them resolve matters.
- The majority of parents who responded to Parent View agreed that behaviour and safety in the school are well managed and that their children are safe and very well looked after.
- Attendance is high and pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Leaders ensure all statutory safeguarding requirements are met.

The leadership and management are good

- The dedicated headteacher and governors have high aspirations and are committed to providing the best education possible for the pupils. Since the new school opened, they have maintained a good standard of teaching and ensured that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has remained above average. They are determined to make the school outstanding.
- School leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Middle leaders are actively involved in this and feel suitably supported by the head of school. They lead training for other staff and are effective in improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- The school's evaluation of its own strengths and areas for development are accurate. The progress of the most able boys in writing has been rightly identified by the school as a key development priority. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and the school recognises there is still more to do to ensure that the most able boys reach their full potential in writing. This is why leadership and management are not outstanding.
- Pupil premium funding is spent effectively on the employment of specialist mathematics and

phonics teachers. An increased drive to meet the needs of pupils eligible for support from pupil premium funding means that teaching is more sharply matched to their needs. As a result, their progress is accelerating.

- The range of subjects that pupils learn and the many opportunities to take part in musical, artistic and sporting activities are a strength of the school. This is enriched with extended opportunities such as a hand-bell ringing club, trips to galleries and museums and a residential trip to the Isle of Wight.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through effective teaching in religious education, history and geography. Pupils have a strong appreciation of the difference between right and wrong and the many opportunities to take on responsibilities; older pupils take great pleasure in being buddies for younger pupils.
 - The sports funding is used primarily to employ a full-time teaching assistant who leads and promotes active engagement in physical education and assists in staff development. Pupils' participation in physical activity is increasing and leaders are beginning to see an improvement in the self-esteem of some pupils who find it difficult to join in.
 - Through choice, the school does not choose to buy support from the local authority.
 - A very large majority of parents and almost all staff who expressed an opinion thought that the school was led and managed well.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are active in the life of the school and are confident in challenging leaders about provision and results that need to be improved. Their direct impact on the school's drive for improvement is good and they are knowledgeable about the school's performance and how it compares to other schools. They have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching and set the headteacher challenging performance management targets that focus directly on school improvement. Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources, including the use of pupil premium funding, and understand the links between salary progression and teachers' performance. They ensure the school meets all its statutory requirements.
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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	138034
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	431424

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Woodroffe
Headteacher	Mark Croly
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01795 532061
Email address	headteacher@luddenham.kent.sch.uk

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