

Locking Primary School

Meadow Drive, Locking, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset, BS24 8BB

Inspection dates

18–19 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, has raised expectations at the school. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.
- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress from their starting points in Reception and throughout Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The school has implemented many initiatives to improve pupils' writing, following disappointing outcomes for higher ability writers in 2013. These initiatives have been highly effective and the quality of pupils' writing has improved significantly this year.
- Groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, achieve as well as and often better than other pupils.
- Teaching across the school is good. Pupils are positive about their learning and work well together and on their own.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. The school knows each pupil's individual needs and, where necessary, provides personalised support for children and their families to enable pupils to achieve their potential.
- Pupils are typically polite and courteous. They behave well during lessons and at break and lunchtime.
- Leaders and staff work together closely as a team. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong, and help to maintain a harmonious environment in which teaching and good behaviour can flourish.
- The governing body knows the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support to leaders to ensure the school continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not yet outstanding. Some lessons do not always allow pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not consistently well developed in a range of subjects.
- Some marking does not give pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils are not always given time to reflect upon, and respond to, teachers' marking.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 13 teachers and conducted additional short visits to classes. Many of these observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers with subject responsibilities, members of the governing body, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including information on pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation and development plan, minutes of meetings, and records relating to the monitoring of teaching, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors took account of 61 responses to the online Parent View survey, one letter from a parent and 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Simon Rowe, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Wring

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Cutler

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Locking Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The Chair of the Governing Body took up his post in September 2013.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- 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?

- Raise pupils' achievement further by ensuring that teachers:
 - develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects
 - plan tasks and activities that enable all pupils to make the progress they are capable of
 - mark pupils' work so that not only do pupils know what they have done well but also what they need to do to improve their learning further
 - give pupils time to read, reflect and act upon the advice given in marking.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Reception with skills that are broadly in line with national expectations. Good teaching enables them to develop their academic and social skills quickly. Many parents take advantage of the opportunity to work alongside their children during the week. As a result, they are able to support their children's development and help their children to make good progress. Some opportunities are missed, however, to reinforce children's literacy and numeracy basic skills when using the outside play area.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught well and systematically. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the phonics screening check in Year 1 is higher than average. Pupils use their phonics skills well to read words they are unsure of and to break up words to spell them accurately.
- In 2013, pupils in Key Stage 1 did not do as well as expected in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has made a concerted effort to ensure this is not repeated by improving the quality of teaching and raising expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. The school's records of current pupils' achievement and the quality of work in their books indicate that pupils are now making good progress.
- In the 2013 national tests, pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics in Year 6. New initiatives have been implemented to improve pupils' writing. These include ensuring pupils have more opportunities to write across all subjects. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing has improved significantly.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding well to provide extra support for eligible pupils through a range of activities. These include one-to-one support and coaching for the end-of-year tests in Year 6. In 2013, eligible pupils were about half a year behind the others in reading, writing and mathematics. This gap has now been eradicated and many of these pupils make better progress than their peers.
- Pupils receive high-quality support, particularly in literacy, to meet their academic and social needs. The school employs a learning mentor and teaching assistant to provide a range of extra help for pupils, including catch-up phonics and reading support. A parent support adviser works with families to provide support outside school. This results in disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Pupils enjoy reading both at school and at home. They use a reading journal to record the titles of books they have read and also to write a paragraph each time they read to demonstrate their understanding of the text.
- The most-able pupils benefit from a range of challenging opportunities, in particular in writing. They make good progress across all subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good. High expectations of pupils' work and behaviour have been established, backed up by clear routines.
- Teachers ensure that their classrooms are stimulating places in which to learn. Displays are used by pupils to prompt their learning, for example through a 'sentence starter window' and a 'noun wall.'
- Relationships between teachers and their pupils are very strong. Pupils follow their teachers' instructions promptly, which allows learning to proceed at a good pace. Movement between different activities is effectively managed and ensures that time is not wasted.
- Most teachers use information about pupils' past achievement well to plan activities which challenge them, particularly in writing. However, because this good practice is not universal across the school, some pupils fail to make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils'

literacy and numeracy skills are not always well developed across a range of subjects, for example by getting pupils to use capital letters at the start of a sentence in all their writing and not just during English lessons.

- Pupils work well on their own and with each other. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were asked to be news reporters. They researched information on fossils in groups and wrote a news report to present to younger pupils. One pupil commented that being a reporter made their learning 'more exciting'.
- Extra adults support pupils effectively both in and outside the classroom.
- Pupils are aware of their targets and monitor their progress towards them well. At its best, marking informs pupils about the quality of their work and tells them what they need to do to improve; teachers provide pupils with opportunities to respond and act upon this advice, which helps them to learn. This good practice is not evident in all classes, however, and some pupils are not routinely given time to read, reflect upon and respond to teachers' marking so that their work improves as a result.
- Most parents who responded to the Parent View survey felt that their children are taught well. Inspectors agreed with that view.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are typically polite and courteous in lessons and at break and lunchtime. Their conduct around the school creates a very positive and harmonious atmosphere.
- In lessons, pupils are usually keen to do well and have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy sharing their thoughts and ideas with the teacher and each other. However, when activities do not capture their attention, they sometimes lose interest and the pace of their learning slows.
- A very large majority of the parents who responded to Parent View felt that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils said that they feel safe at school.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe, particularly when they are using the internet. Pupils said that bullying is very rare. They were confident that, if they did have a problem, they could talk to an adult and the school would take swift action.
- Incidents of disruptive behaviour are rare and the number of exclusions is very low.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has fallen.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have raised the expectations of what pupils can achieve at the school and have provided the strong leadership necessary to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Staff work positively alongside senior leaders, and all those who responded to the staff questionnaire said that they were proud to be at the school.
- Senior leaders know the school well. Their self-evaluation is accurate and recognises the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders provide training for all staff on key aspects of teaching identified in the school development plan and also support individual teachers when necessary. Helped by close links with two other schools, teachers are beginning to share the most effective practice to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching.
- Subject leaders monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' progress through lesson observations, work scrutiny and visits to lessons. They recognise there is more to do to raise pupils' achievement further and have clear ideas and plans to bring about improvements.

- The procedures to manage staff performance have been strengthened to ensure that the school's key areas for development are addressed. For example, all teachers have a target to raise the quality of pupils' writing. The Teachers' Standards are used to measure and improve the quality of teaching in all classes.
- The curriculum is well designed and provides pupils with a wide range of experiences that enables them to do well. The school's highly effective support for pupils ensures a strong and appropriate focus on equality of opportunity, giving every pupil the chance to reach their potential.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy singing, assemblies, studying different cultures, for example the Egyptians, and exploring religions during multi-faith week. The school has developed strong links to a school in Sri Lanka and pupils now know a lot about this country and its culture. To strengthen home-school links, the school provides a wide range of activities for pupils and their parents, for example family breakfast and Christmas cookery.
- Pupils use their initiative and develop leadership skills in enterprise activities. They make and sell smoothies and hot chocolate at break and lunchtime. They have used the proceeds from this activity to purchase equipment for the playground.
- The new primary school sport funding has been used effectively to improve physical education teaching and to broaden access to sporting activities. Qualified coaches are teaching physical education lessons alongside teachers and lunchtime play leaders to develop their confidence and expertise in this area. A dedicated teaching assistant has developed a 'change for life' club, which is encouraging pupils to participate in sport and exercise more regularly.
- The local authority adviser knows the school very well and works closely with leaders to provide effective support. She has conducted joint lesson observations with leaders to ensure their judgements are accurate and also reviewed the quality of pupils' writing to confirm the school's improvement priorities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school's strengths and weaknesses, particularly with regard to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. The governors provide a good level of challenge and support to leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve. They have also strengthened the process used to manage staff performance. In doing so they are ensuring that teachers are held robustly to account for the achievement of the pupils they teach. Governors administer additional funding well and monitor its impact on raising standards. All safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory 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	109103
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	431476

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	329
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Norman Donovan
Headteacher	Mrs Joanne Jones
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 June 2009
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