

Lawefield Primary School

Lawefield Lane, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 8ST

Inspection dates 13–14 May 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.

- From low starting points, children get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception. Children who speak English as an additional language are helped to join in quickly and learn happily with their friends.
- Pupils learn best in reading and mathematics. Overall standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave school. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- By and large, teaching is good. The school has worked hard to ensure that disruption to the continuity of teaching in some classes has not had an adverse effect on pupils' learning.
- Pupils are very keen to learn. They look after one another, behave well and feel safe at school.
- Staff use information about pupils' learning very well to help them improve. The support provided for all groups of pupils means they make good progress.
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership for the school. He has established a strong staff team who support each other well. Leaders have succeeded in securing good achievement at the school.
- The school is assiduous in its work with parents and carers, helping them to support their children's learning. It is very highly regarded in the local community.
- The governing body is well informed and is diligent in challenging the school to do better.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teaching is good and as a result a few pupils can lose focus and become inattentive. This can slow the pace of learning for others.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is not as good as it is in other subjects. The feedback that pupils receive is not consistently effective in helping pupils to improve their work. In some cases, pupils' work is poorly presented.
- Pupils are not necessarily expected to respond to the written advice their teachers provide. Marking does not always stretch the most able pupils to think more deeply about their work.
- Leaders' checks on teaching do not always pinpoint clearly enough how teaching could be improved.

Information about this inspection

- Seventeen whole lessons or parts of lessons were observed, of which two were jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors observed teaching in all classes.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, middle leaders and various members of staff. Inspectors also spoke with many pupils, in meetings with them, at break and lunchtimes and during lessons. The lead inspector also met with three members of the governing body, including the Chair, and with a local authority adviser.
- Inspectors observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils read.
- Samples of work were studied as well as information about pupils' progress.
- Safeguarding documentation and records of behaviour were examined.
- Inspectors looked at the ten responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Other parents' views were obtained informally at the start of the school day and a summary of parents' feedback gathered by the school was also considered.
- The views of staff were obtained and 19 responded to a staff written questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lee Northern, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jennifer Firth

Additional Inspector

Pamela Hemphill

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is close to the average size for a primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Just over half of all pupils who attend the school are of Pakistani heritage and an increasing proportion of pupils come from countries in Eastern Europe. The proportions from minority ethnic communities or who speak English as an additional language are well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An above average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times.
- At present, pupils in Years 1, 2, 3 and 5 are taught by temporary members of staff, including a newly qualified teacher. The school currently has three teachers on maternity leave. In addition, owing to an extended period of absence, the deputy headteacher has not been in school for much of this academic year.
- This school works in a recently established partnership with two other primary schools in the local authority. The headteacher has recently supported another primary school in Wakefield and leads training events for staff from across the local area.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good by making sure that leaders' checks make clear the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, including over time, and how it can be improved.
- Improve pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring that pupils, including the most able, are clear how they can improve their learning, and that they respond to the advice provided
 - establishing a consistent approach to improving standards of presentation and handwriting across the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start the school with skills and abilities that are low in relation to those typical for their age. Although still below the levels expected by the time they leave Reception, most children have made good gains in their all-round abilities and are well prepared for the start of Year 1.
- Staff make sure younger children settle quickly into school routines and the excellent links with parents and carers in all year groups ensure they are fully involved in their children's learning. Children in the early stages of learning English receive effective support as a result of good quality assessment that picks up very precisely on their particular needs.
- This good progress continues throughout the school, with pupils reaching broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Although attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is slightly below national averages, challenging targets and detailed checks on pupils' learning have helped to accelerate progress this year.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain more highly in mathematics and reading than they do in writing. In mathematics, most pupils show a secure understanding of number, can calculate well and use a good range of strategies with confidence. Standards are rising in this subject as a result of a good focus on securing pupils' mental and written methods.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, including those pupils for whom English is an additional language. Most pupils enjoy reading, and read from a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts. However, for some lower-attaining pupils in older year groups, the books they are given to read are not always appropriate for their age.
- The teaching of reading is good. Younger readers are able to use their skills well to tackle unfamiliar words confidently and accurately and to show a good understanding of the stories they read.
- Although rising, standards are not as high in writing as for other subjects. Some pupils do not take enough care over their presentation and sometimes untidy handwriting is noted by teachers but not followed-up sufficiently. However, a focus on specific features of high-quality writing, such as the use of connectives, has improved the quality of work for most pupils, including in subjects such as history and science. Work in books and on displays around the school shows pupils write for a good range of different audiences and purposes with confidence.
- The most able pupils achieve well. In a few lessons, however, they are not challenged enough to make even faster progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, the majority of the class were asked to work out the cost of seven pencils priced at two pence each. A group of the most able pupils had to calculate the cost of five pencils at six pence each, which provided little extra challenge. Some marking, too, does not expect the most able pupils to deepen their understanding.
- The progress made by pupils with special educational needs or disabilities is checked very carefully. Using information from this ongoing assessment, teaching assistants and teachers adapt their teaching and provide good-quality support that helps to secure good gains in learning.
- The school uses a wide range of strategies to raise the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium. As a result, their progress across all year groups is at least as good as that of other pupils; any differences in attainment are small and are closing. In 2013, pupils eligible for this support were, overall, around one term behind other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good overall. However, across the school it varies a little in quality and not all teaching is good. Leaders' support is effective in helping teaching to improve.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' achievement. Teachers plan carefully to interest

all groups of pupils in their learning. As a result, pupils show very good attitudes to school and want to do well. However, in some lessons, pupils do not get enough opportunity to discuss and develop their ideas before beginning pieces of writing which slows their progress in writing.

- In Nursery and Reception, a well-considered balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves enables youngsters to develop confidence in talking and thinking about what is going on around them. Although adults guide and support learning well, not all teaching encourages children to explore their ideas and develop their imagination. As a result, opportunities for children to extend their speaking and listening skills are sometimes missed.
- The teaching of mathematics is good, particularly in Key Stage 2, and there is a strong focus on developing pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils enjoy solving problems and are confident in applying the mathematics they learn in other subjects, such as in science.
- Teaching inspires a love of learning among pupils. In a lesson about the life cycle of a butterfly, younger pupils watched in wonder and with rapt attention. Through the skilful use of technology to support learning, the teacher's approach enriched the quality of pupils' writing.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked, which provides encouragement and detailed feedback. However, the impact of marking is sometimes not as good as it could be because the feedback provided is not precise enough and pupils are not always expected to respond to the advice provided.
- Some pupils say the marking in their books is not always helpful. One pupil remarked that he appreciated the feedback he received in mathematics because he knew how to correct his work; in literacy, he said he 'just got comments'. While most teaching helps pupils to improve their spelling and handwriting, there is not a consistent approach across all classes.
- Assessment information is used very effectively to plan and adapt teaching. Teachers look carefully at pupils' answers to assessment tasks to identify weaknesses and misconceptions. Time is set aside each day to help pupils sort out these gaps in their learning. This approach is effective in helping pupils to maintain good progress, particularly at the current time when there are a number of temporary teachers in school.
- Teaching assistants and other adults work closely with teachers to help individual pupils or small groups. Carefully tailored support for pupils who speak English as an additional language means they integrate quickly into lessons and are helped to make rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say theirs is a happy school and they like coming in every day. They are keen to learn and to do well. Their behaviour around the school site is good and they respond quickly to the requests of teachers and other adults.
- Pupils like to take on roles of responsibility, such as volunteering to help out at lunchtimes. The school is clean and the many displays of artwork in corridors and classrooms are well presented and cared for. Pupils are helped to understand and respect the difference between right and wrong, typifying the school's very effective work in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- However, pupils say that the behaviour of a very small number of other pupils in a few lessons can distract them from their learning. This is where teaching is not as good as usual and the pace of learning slows. Pupils say that such instances are unusual and are dealt with effectively by the teacher or other adults. This is the chief reason why behaviour is not judged outstanding.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school site is very well managed and adults ensure pupils are safe at all times. At the time of the inspection, all statutory requirements in relation to the safe recruitment of staff and risk assessment were met.
- Pupils play well together at social times and enjoy mixing with their friends. They are very good at making sure everyone feels included. On a small number of occasions, disagreements or name calling can lead to them falling out with their friends. When this happens, adults are quick to intervene and to help pupils resolve their differences. A scrutiny of the school's records shows that while such instances do occur, they are uncommon and rarely repeated.

- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe on the internet or while using mobile phones. While pupils report that bullying is very rare, not all pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying that can take place.
- The school now has a very rigorous approach to improving pupils' attendance. Although attendance has been low in recent years, a focus on reducing absence and persistent absence in the current academic year has brought about significant improvement. While the overall level of attendance remains slightly below the national average, it is improving quickly.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides a clear vision and direction for the school and leads by example in setting very high expectations for staff. He is highly regarded within the local area and contributes to training activities organised by the local authority for other schools. The school is at the centre of its community and is very well thought of by parents and carers.
- Senior leaders have established very effective systems to underpin the work of the school. The effectiveness of these approaches can be seen in the way the school has maintained its effectiveness in the face of considerable staffing disruption. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.
- The school development plan addresses an appropriate range of priorities and is based upon an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are closely involved in checking the progress made in improving the school.
- The leadership of teaching is good. There is a systematic approach to checking the quality of teaching, pupils' work and the effectiveness of teachers' planning. The findings from these checks provide useful information for teachers' performance management. However, leaders' checks on teaching do not always make clear enough the impact of teaching on pupils' learning over time and how it can be improved.
- The close monitoring of pupils' achievement is a strong feature of the work of the school. Information about the progress made by pupils in all year groups is regularly collected and used to target support for specific pupils that has a marked effect on their progress. In addition, the school checks closely the impact of strategies it uses through the pupil premium and takes rapid action to adjust these approaches where they are less effective.
- Middle leaders contribute well to improvement. For example, they analyse the outcomes of assessments to provide detailed feedback to staff. This feedback is used to adapt teaching, provide staff training and to focus teaching on weaknesses in pupils' learning.
- Performance management is used appropriately to reward and develop staff. The targets set for individual teachers contribute to improvements at the school.
- The local authority has provided appropriate levels of support for this good school. It sensibly arranged for a thorough review of the school to ensure that good provision and outcomes were being maintained during the current period where some classes are being taught by temporary members of staff.
- The primary school sport funding is used to support a wide range of activities enjoyed by pupils. Clubs and teams are available for pupils every night of the school week. Staff benefit from training to improve their skills and pupils' participation in sporting activities has increased.
- The school is participating in a partnership with two other local primary schools, although it is too early to see the impact of this arrangement. The headteacher is also providing valued leadership support for senior leaders of another primary school in Wakefield.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide good support for the school. They bring a valuable range of expertise and experience and understand important aspects of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors provide good levels of challenge for school leaders. They are developing a more rigorous approach to gaining a wider and more detailed understanding of the school, including through meetings with school staff and presentations from middle leaders. They understand how the pupil premium money is used

and the impact it has on pupils' achievement. They are well informed about how performance management is used to reward good teaching.

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	131734
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	427364

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	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joe Brandi
Headteacher	Craig Batley
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2011
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