

# Langdale Primary School

Langdale Road, Newcastle, ST5 3QE

**Inspection dates** 10–11 December 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' progress requires improvement in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 2. Recent initiatives to improve achievement in these two subjects have not yet had full impact.
- Not enough pupils, including some of the most able, are working at the levels of which they are capable in Key Stage 2. This is because teachers do not have consistently high expectations for their progress.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2, who are in receipt of extra government funding, are not making good progress and are still too far behind their peers.
- Children in Nursery and Reception do not achieve as well as they should. Checks on their progress are not sharp enough to direct teaching.
- Marking is not used consistently well to support pupils' progress.
- Data on pupils' progress are not analysed sharply enough. This prevents leaders at all levels from acquiring an accurate enough view of pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 to set consistently challenging targets for each pupil.
- Subject and other leaders are not as effective as they might be because the checks they carry out on the school's work are not focused sharply enough on priority areas for raising achievement.
- The checks made on the quality of teaching do not clearly identify what needs to be improved. As a result, weaknesses in teaching are not corrected quickly enough.
- The new governing body has not yet acquired a detailed knowledge of the school's performance or the skills necessary to hold leaders fully to account for the school's performance.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve well because of good teaching.
- Recently appointed teachers are helping to raise the overall quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is starting to improve.
- Pupils' attendance is above average.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They behave well in lessons and around school.
- Pupils feel very secure in school due to the school's good arrangements for keeping them safe.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching during visits to classrooms to check on pupils' learning. On two visits, they were accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- They heard a range of pupils in Years 2 and 6 reading and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, a member of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to a questionnaire completed by staff and the 105 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. An inspector spoke informally to some parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors checked a range of evidence, including: monitoring records; consultants' reports; the school improvement plan; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and practice relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Parr

Additional Inspector

Carol Deakin

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- The school's part-time Nursery operates in the mornings and afternoons for two separate classes. Reception children attend on a full-time basis. The school also offers a club which provides care for pupils before and after school and during school holidays. This club, which also provides 'wraparound' care for Nursery children, is not managed by the governing body and was inspected in January 2014. Its report can be found on [reports.ofsted.gov.uk](http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk).
- Around nine-in-ten pupils are from White British backgrounds. The remaining pupils are from various minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority, is well below average at about one in eight.
- At around one in twenty-four, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is low.
- Several teachers have joined the staff in the last eight months. Most of them are newly qualified teachers.
- The new Chair of the Governing Body took up post in September 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2, and so improve progress and standards in reading and in mathematics, by ensuring that:
  - teachers always provide pupils, especially the most able, with work that makes them think hard and learn as quickly as they can
  - new initiatives to raise achievement in reading have the required impact
  - teachers use marking well to support pupils' progress
  - teachers and senior leaders set challenging targets for pupils' achievement.
- Improve children's achievement in Nursery and Reception by ensuring that ongoing assessment is used rigorously to direct teaching.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
  - leaders acquire an accurate view of pupils' achievement and all leaders are more accountable for driving school improvement
  - leaders check the quality of teaching more rigorously to improve staff's performance
  - leaders focus the checks they carry out on the school's work more precisely on key areas for improvement
  - leaders monitor closely the impact of the strategies they use for helping Key Stage 2 pupils eligible for pupil premium funding to catch up with their peers
  - governors develop their knowledge of the school and skills to enable them to hold senior leaders fully to account for the school's performance.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school collects a lot of data on pupils' performance. Some of this information is not linked closely to comparisons with the achievement of all pupils nationally and does not show clearly the progress different groups of pupils make from their starting points. Consequently, leaders do not have a fully accurate picture of the quality of pupils' achievement. Targets for the attainment of pupils in reading and in mathematics by the end of Year 6 are not as challenging as they could be.
- Leaders know the main priorities for raising pupils' achievement. However, the school's long-term plan is not focused sharply enough on these areas to enable timely, concerted actions to be taken to close gaps and to secure swift improvement. The school is in the early stages of working towards its preferred form of assessment following withdrawal of National Curriculum levels.
- Suitable arrangements have been made for appraising staff's performance. Staff's targets for this year have been linked more closely to closing gaps in pupils' achievement. School records on teaching sometimes pinpoint what teachers need to do next to improve their skills and to accelerate pupils' progress. However, this information is often not acted upon quickly enough.
- The school ensures that there is no discrimination, but does not promote equal opportunities fully. Pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable are supported suitably. Leaders' use of pupil premium funding has successfully reduced gaps for disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 1. It has not raised achievement quickly in Key Stage 2. Best practice in teaching this group has not been reviewed or shared with colleagues and the impact of interventions has not been monitored closely.
- The school's work has, until recently, had little robust external scrutiny. A challenging analysis, conducted by the new local authority consultant in October 2014, has laid the groundwork for more detailed checks to be undertaken in the near future by the local authority and its partners.
- Initiatives to improve the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement are more established in Key Stage 1 where staffing has been more stable. Recent strategies, implemented by leaders with increasing urgency, are now starting to accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 2.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils benefit from days where the normal timetable is suspended to enable them to reinforce their basic skills and to apply them in interesting ways. Pupils talked to an inspector with enthusiasm about how they had used their mathematics to calculate discount in a pretend shop during the recent Germany Day.
- The school has tackled weaknesses in pupils' spiritual and cultural development identified in the previous report successfully. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good. Leaders' efforts to improve pupils' cultural awareness are recognised by the International Schools Award, while local church groups run assemblies and after-school clubs. Enrichment activities and visitors, including parents representing various faith groups, deepen pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils understand diversity, accept differences and elect school councillors democratically to stand up for their interests.
- The national school sports funding has been spent appropriately, for example, to train staff, to employ specialist coaches and to subsidise transport costs to competitions and off-site sporting facilities. Pupils in Key Stage 1 now access a greater variety of multi-sports activities, and participation in sport has increased across the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has had several changes in personnel and leadership over the past year, which have disrupted its capacity to provide the school with strong strategic direction.

- Governors know the school’s strengths and can pinpoint the areas of weakness in pupils’ achievement in Key Stage 2. They are aware of the initiatives the school has taken to tackle these shortfalls. They have scrutinised pupils’ books and have identified weaknesses in teachers’ marking.
- However, governors have, until very recently, been over-reliant on reports received from senior leaders in making their evaluations of the impact of teaching on pupils’ achievement. They are unable to assess independently whether gaps in pupils’ achievement are closing, including those for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, and if so, by how much.
- They have, very recently, become more involved in managing staff’s performance and are taking suitable steps to ensure that salary increases are merited.
- Governors ensure that current government requirements for safeguarding are fully met and that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils develop, at an early age, a strong sense of self-discipline. Consequently, nearly all pupils behave impeccably in public areas, such as the dining-hall and in corridors, and also in lessons. Pupils respect the staff and comply quickly with their wishes. This ensures that little time is lost between activities. They participate willingly in assemblies and demonstrate consistently positive attitudes.
- Pupils enjoy school, as reflected in their above-average attendance. Enrichment activities, such as play productions, provide excellent opportunities for pupils to work together. Pupils develop their leadership skills, for example, by assuming responsibility for the lighting and musical accompaniment on these occasions. This strong sense of collaboration is reflected in playground activities, which boys and girls enjoy together, and promotes very supportive classroom relationships.
- Pupils relate well to staff and demonstrate their self-reliance by independently accessing classroom resources when the teacher is otherwise occupied. They are keen to ‘have a go’, respond quickly to the teacher’s questions and concentrate hard. They mostly present their work neatly and complete tasks set. However, they report that they sometimes find the work straightforward and that they would like to be challenged more.
- Parents view the school’s work positively. They have very few concerns with pupils’ behaviour, and the school’s records show that incidents of untoward behaviour are uncommon. When serious breaches of the behaviour code occur, suitable action is taken.

### Safety

- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are well supervised at break times and staff respond quickly if pupils move out of a specified play zone. However, nearly all pupils have little need for adult intervention, as they organise themselves well and create their own enjoyment.
- The school’s behaviour logs show that there have been no racist incidents in the last two years. Other types of misbehaviour are usually isolated, individual occurrences. While these are recorded, they are not analysed closely to identify patterns or to measure the impact of actions taken.
- Pupils know how to play safely and can provide reasoned answers for the closure of the trim trail during the winter months. They are confident that teachers listen to their problems, and they use the ‘worry box’ in classrooms to let staff know that they would like their help. They are aware of a range of strategies for staying safe on the internet, including the purpose of filters, and of the dangers of cyber-bullying.
- Pupils are clear about the purpose and use of sanctions and state that staff keep them safe, for example, by ensuring that the rare incidents of bullying are quickly followed up.
- The school’s nurture group provides effective support for pupils who have difficulty managing their behaviour. Parents report that staff are readily available to discuss any issues that arise and that pupils

with additional needs are well cared for.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Over time, teaching in Key Stage 2 has not ensured that pupils achieve well.
- Lesson activities are not always precisely focused on the skills that groups need to acquire or to practise next, especially in mathematics, and so pupils are not moved on quickly enough to more challenging work. The targets teachers provide pupils with to guide their work are often not closely matched to their differing abilities. These factors, in combination, slow pupils' progress.
- Teachers' marking is variable in quality. Sometimes, teachers' useful written feedback helps pupils to extend their learning but, on other occasions, pupils receive limited guidance on how to improve their work. Marking does not always identify precisely gaps in pupils' skills to help staff determine which pupils need extra help.
- Pupils with statements of special educational needs are supported effectively through one-to-one support from teaching assistants.
- Teachers manage pupils well and nearly always provide them with work which they enjoy. There is evidence that teaching is improving, partly because good, recent appointments have been made. Mathematical skills are being taught more securely as pupils now have better opportunities to work with practical resources to help them to understand new concepts. Teachers are now probing pupils' understanding in greater depth.
- Reading skills are taught adequately. Over the last year, staff have introduced a number of useful initiatives to improve pupils' progress, especially that of boys', in reading, but these have not yet had a clear impact on pupils' progress.
- Writing skills are usually taught well. Teachers often provide pupils with work which makes them think hard. This was observed, for example in a lesson in Year 6, where the teacher skilfully directed pupils to compare and to contrast authors. She enabled them to unpick figurative language and to explain clearly how writers use language to create atmosphere.
- Staffing and actions taken by leaders are more established in Key Stage 1 where teaching is more consistently effective. This was observed, for example in two mathematics lessons, where the teachers made very effective use of computer technology to explore mathematical vocabulary and to secure pupils' understanding of number bonds.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment when they join Year 1 is average. Results in the Year 1 screening check for phonics (the sounds that letters make) were average in 2014, but were lower than in 2013. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average and has been rising steadily over the last five years. However, pupils in the current Year 2 classes are working at slightly lower levels.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has largely remained unchanged since the previous inspection. In 2013 and 2014 it was average overall compared with national figures, and above average in writing. Year 6 targets in reading were not fully met in 2014, with reading attainment slightly lower than the national average.
- Pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make fast enough progress in reading and in mathematics in Key Stage 2 to enable more pupils to work at more challenging levels. Some gaps in attainment remain between boys and girls in Years 4 and 5 in reading and writing.

- In 2014, on average disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were working about one year behind all pupils nationally, five terms behind their classmates in mathematics and writing, and three and a half terms behind in reading. While leaders have used effective strategies to reduce these gaps in attainment in Key Stage 1, actions in Key Stage 2 are not yet closing the gap between some disadvantaged pupils and others quickly enough
- Some of the most able pupils are not given good opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and ideas fully over a sustained period of time, which is why their achievement requires improvement. On occasion, they mark time in lessons, repeating work that they can already do, particularly in mathematics. Sometimes, they finish their extension tasks quickly and have to wait for other groups to complete their work.
- Pupils enjoy reading, can explain the differences between fact and fiction and can state and justify their preferences. However, girls mostly read with greater confidence and fluency than boys. Some less able pupils are less accurate in reading aloud, and are hesitant in decoding and blending tricky words.
- Pupils are articulate and take turns to share ideas in groups. This supports their progress in writing well. They draw appropriate conclusions from their evaluations of different sources of evidence and explain their reasoning confidently. They understand how their learning in other subjects, such as science, fits in with their writing work, for example, on Viking longboats. They can say what metaphors and similes are, how they are used and how they might use them to enhance their work.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- Children's skills and knowledge when they join Nursery are typical for their age. The percentage of children in Reception who reached a good level of development in 2014 was a little higher than in 2013 but remained broadly in line with the national average. In 2014, girls achieved much better than boys. There was a significant number of boys with additional needs in this year group, who achieved adequately given their starting point.
- Assessment systems are under-developed, especially in Reception and need to improve quickly. Children's learning journeys and other evidence indicate that staff do not record children's achievements fully and precisely in all areas of learning. The school does not work with parents as well as it might do to encourage them to contribute to these journeys.
- Teaching programmes are not always adapted to individual needs, and lesson activities do not always ensure continuity in the development of children's skills. This slows children's progress and means that they are only adequately prepared to move into Key Stage 1.
- In lessons, children respond well to the interesting activities provided for them. They listen carefully to adults, follow instructions and understand rules and routines. They nearly always behave well and are kept safe. Most children show interest and curiosity and play well together. They are beginning to understand conversations but some children need reassurance from an adult to encourage them to share their ideas, for example during counting activities.
- The new coordinator has useful plans in place to address the identified weaknesses. Leaders have acted quickly on recent consultancy advice and have improved opportunities for children to become more independent and to practise their skills outdoors.

## 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>	135204
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448603

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	431
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nichola Glover-Edge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carol Richards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 297690
<b>Fax number</b>	01782 297692
<b>Email address</b>	office@langdale.staffs.sch.uk

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