

Lambs Lane Primary School

Back Lane, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 1JB

Inspection dates 4–5 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils do not read as well as they should, because they are not taught a sufficient range of reading strategies. Books and activities are not well enough matched to their needs and interests.
- Teachers do not do enough to ensure pupils develop a love of reading, share their enthusiasm for books and authors with each other and make good use of the school library.
- Over time, pupils, including those that are disadvantaged and the most able, have not made consistently good progress in each subject.
- Too many pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, without having reached the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are given too few opportunities to work independently. Consequently, they do not develop sufficient resilience to tackle problems confidently without adult support.
- Teachers do not consistently plan activities that will challenge pupils of different abilities and some work in mathematics is too repetitive. This slows the progress pupils make.
- Senior leaders do not analyse patterns of pupils' achievement sufficiently well. This limits their ability to improve teaching and the progress pupils make.
- Leaders at all levels are not consistently ambitious enough about how well pupils can achieve, so actions to improve achievement hitherto have lacked urgency.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are polite, well mannered and keen to learn. They respect their teachers and appreciate all they do to help them.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They have confidence that their children are kept safe and report they are always keen to come to school.
- Pupils with complex needs, in the resource provision, make good progress due to teaching which is tailored to their individual needs and abilities.
- Children make a good start to their education due to good teaching in the Reception class. They make good progress and are well prepared for entering Year 1.
- The staff team work well together. They strive to meet the needs of the pupils and to develop their own practice.
- Senior leaders and governors are committed to improving the school and are instilling a sense of pride in staff and pupils. Significant strides have been made since the last inspection and there is now no inadequate teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, of which two were observed jointly with the headteacher. They scrutinised the pupils' work in books and displayed around the school.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and spoke to them informally at play times and lunchtimes. They also met with school leaders, including governors, and with members of staff and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors studied a range of documents including information on the attainment and progress of pupils, monitoring records, plans for improvement, minutes of governors' meetings and reports commissioned by the school.
- Inspectors took account of 55 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire), together with 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robert Eyre-Brook, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alison Hendy

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. The great majority of pupils are White British.
- The school has a resource base, which provides places for up to 10 pupils. This was previously for pupils with physical disabilities, but was re-designated in September 2014 as being for pupils with complex needs. Nine pupils currently attend this provision, some of whom spend almost all the day with their mainstream class, while others are taught separately for much of the day.
- The overall proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after) is below average.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club, both of which are managed by the school.
- The school currently has additional pupils in Year 2 and Year 4. These pupils were admitted in the Reception year to meet an increased demand for places locally. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, and those in Years 5 and 6 are taught in classes spanning the two year groups.
- The early years provision comprises one Reception class, whose pupils attend full time.
- The deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator were both away from the school at the time of the last inspection. Both subsequently returned to the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in reading by:
 - improving the teaching of reading skills through better matching the books and activities to the needs and interests of the pupils
 - teaching a wider range of reading strategies
 - developing the pupils' love of reading by encouraging them to share their enthusiasm for favourite books and authors
 - making the school library a focus for reading for all pupils.
- Accelerate pupils' progress through improving teaching by:
 - ensuring teachers plan challenging learning activities, especially for the most able and for disadvantaged pupils
 - developing pupils' independence so they are less reliant on adults supporting them
 - ensuring activities in mathematics are challenging and never repetitive.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - analysing all available information about the progress made by different groups of pupils in each subject and taking rapid action to ensure it improves
 - raising the expectations of leaders at all levels, so that they are better able to focus on raising standards in the areas for which they are responsible.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because pupils, including the most able and those that are disadvantaged, have not, over time, made sufficient progress. There is a history of underachievement and this has yet to be fully addressed.
- The senior leadership of the school has been brought back up to full strength since the last inspection. Leaders have secured improvements in teaching, especially of writing, and have ensured that no teaching is inadequate. However, they have not ensured teaching is good enough so that pupils make consistently good progress, particularly in reading.
- Leaders monitor the effectiveness of teaching and this has contributed to its improvement, along with regular training and professional development for staff. However, the school's judgements of the quality of teaching over time are sometimes inaccurate and so improvement has not been fast enough. Teachers have opportunities to observe and learn from colleagues within and beyond the school, but these have not yet led to sufficiently effective teaching in some classes.
- Leaders ensure that the progress of individual pupils is checked regularly. However, teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in reading are sometimes overgenerous and so not matched by pupils' performance in external tests.
- School leaders have a clear vision for a caring and hardworking school community, summed up in the school's motto 'Reach out and Shine'. This positive ethos is shared by members of the staff team, who work hard and cohesively, striving to do their best for the pupils.
- School leaders plan carefully for the spending of the pupil premium. However, their decision to focus much of the expenditure on additional staffing has not led to sufficient impact on the progress made by disadvantaged pupils.
- Subject leaders provide support for their colleagues and monitor both the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils in their subjects. While this has brought about improvement, subject leaders have yet to ensure progress is consistent across their subject and across year groups.
- Leaders ensure pupils have a wide range of interesting topics from which to learn. This provides them with many creative opportunities so that pupils' interests and talents are well catered for. Pupils benefit from a good range of clubs and educational visits.
- The specialist resource base is well led. Consequently, the provision for these pupils is good and well matched to their individual needs and they make good progress from their starting points. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs across the whole school are fully included in the life of the school and equality of opportunity is promoted well.
- Leaders ensure that the performance of teachers is reflected in their pay, with only the stronger teachers progressing up the pay scale. Newly qualified and less experienced teachers and those new to the school are well supported with appropriate guidance and training, so quickly become effective teachers.
- Leaders have the confidence of the parents, who appreciate how the headteacher welcomes the pupils each morning and knows them as individuals. Parents are given regular updates on how their children are progressing and have ample opportunities to come into school.
- School leaders ensure that behaviour is well managed and that pupils understand the importance of behaving well. They have ensured that all pupils feel valued, benefit equally from the opportunities available and are free from discrimination of any kind.. By developing a clear and consistent system of rules, rewards and sanctions, leaders have enabled pupils with a history of challenging behaviour in other settings to be settled into the school very successfully.
- School leaders promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils well. Consequently, they show very positive attitudes, are respectful of others and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to learn about the faiths and beliefs of people outside their own local community.
- The local authority provides good support for the school and has made a strong contribution to the improvements that have been made since the last inspection, particularly in eliminating inadequate teaching and improving achievement in writing. It has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Robust procedures are in place to ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met. The school works well, in collaboration with outside agencies, to support families in challenging circumstances.
- Leaders make good use of the primary physical education and sport premium to provide extra equipment and training for staff and to employ a specialist sports coach. This ensures pupils acquire skills in physical education rapidly and have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sporting competitions.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance has improved significantly since the last inspection and a new Chair of the Governing Body has been elected. Governors are now more closely involved in the work of the school, visiting it regularly and checking up on its progress. The governing body commissioned a review of governance as recommended in the previous inspection report and has acted on its recommendations. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and understand areas that need to improve. They seek out any training they may need.
- Governors are ambitious for the school, support school leaders well and challenge where they see signs of underperformance. They oversee the performance management of staff and ensure that good performance is rewarded. However, they have not analysed the standards achieved by the pupils in sufficient depth, so have not fully recognised where the progress of pupils has been too slow and teaching has not been sufficiently strong.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and strive to meet these expectations. Good behaviour is recognised and celebrated, for example by an invitation to 'high tea' with the headteacher.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning. They strive to do their best and take pride in their work. In those lessons that are less engaging, however, pupils tend to become inattentive and noise levels rise.
- Behaviour around the school, in the lunch hall and the playground is good. However, play can become a little boisterous during some play times when there is too little equipment provided to keep them busy. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility, such as becoming a school councillor.
- Pupils are polite and respectful towards one another, members of staff and visitors. One pupil commented on how pupils' manners have improved over recent years and how they will now open doors for adults. Pupils report that poor behaviour is unusual and is dealt with effectively.
- The school maintains detailed records of behaviour and analyses these to ensure any problem areas are identified and addressed. These records show a strong pattern of good behaviour.
- Behaviour in the school's resource base is good. On occasions a pupil's complex needs may lead to frustration and some distress. When this happens, members of staff respond with sensitivity and skill, with the result that the pupil calms quickly and is able to resume learning.
- Because they enjoy school, pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, attend very regularly. Any cases of absence are followed up promptly.
- Staff in the school's breakfast and after-school clubs provide an engaging range of activities and ensure pupils enjoy themselves and are kept safe.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils report that bullying is very rare and, if it ever occurs, is dealt with quickly. An 'Anti-Bullying Week' each autumn term is used to focus the whole school community on how to prevent bullying.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe on the roads and when using the internet. However, in some year groups understanding of e-safety is not well enough developed and pupils are not sufficiently aware of the dangers of drugs.
- Pupils have confidence in the staff to look after them and consequently they feel safe. Parents are similarly confident in the school's work to keep their children safe and secure.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement, because it is not ensuring that pupils consistently make the progress of which they are capable. In too many lessons, the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged, so too few achieve at the highest levels.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has improved and consequently pupils are able to use this knowledge to help them to read. However, the teaching of other reading skills is not

effective enough, so some pupils struggle to understand the meaning of what they read..

- Teachers encourage pupils to read very regularly at home and pupils respond positively to competitions to see who has read every day. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to share their enthusiasm for a book or an author they have particularly enjoyed, so do not sufficiently develop a love of reading. Older pupils do not access the school's library regularly so it does not play a fully effective role in promoting reading in the school.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Good systems are in place to enable teachers to show pupils, through their marking, how they can improve their work. This has led to improved progress in writing. However, these systems are not fully effective in all classes as some teachers' marking is insufficiently specific and is too limited to encouraging comments.
- Teaching is stronger in Years 5 and 6. In one highly engaging lesson, pupils' understanding of how the heart operates was developed very effectively. Pupils were riveted by the way the teacher demonstrated the scientific principles and the associated vocabulary was clearly understood.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and plan work accordingly. In reading, however, pupils do not display the degree of confidence that would be expected given the levels at which they have been assessed. Teachers set targets for pupils and update these regularly. These help pupils to know what they should focus on next, but sometime the large number of targets mean pupils are confused.
- Pupils are taught to apply their understanding of mathematics to real situations and this helps them to progress. However, they are sometimes required to complete too many examples of the same type of calculation without being challenged to tackle more demanding work.
- Teaching assistants work effectively to support pupils' learning and to contribute to the assessment of their progress. Due to the high numbers of support staff, pupils are not expected to work independently very often and some do not develop sufficiently high level of resilience to enable them to overcome difficulties for themselves.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils are not consistently reaching the levels of which they are capable by the time they leave the school. In 2014, pupils' achievement in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 improved because the school focused on this subject, but that in reading and mathematics declined. The school has not succeeded in improving achievement sufficiently since the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress in the early years, where they acquire skills rapidly. Progress in phonics has accelerated rapidly and the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the phonics check at the end of Year 1 is now higher than the national average.
- Achievement at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with the national average, but has not improved in recent years at the rate seen nationally. Progress across Key Stage 2 is not rapid enough, especially in reading.
- The achievement of the most able is not good enough. Too few pupils achieve the higher levels, especially in reading and mathematics, because the teaching does not challenge them sufficiently.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress that is at least similar to that of their peers, nationally. This is because they are well supported in class. Those in the school's resource base make good progress because work is individualised for them and teaching is strong.
- The school's own assessments of progress this academic year show an improving trend. However, this has yet to be confirmed in statutory assessments and the achievement of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, especially in reading, was less than the school's own assessments had indicated.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress that is similar to that of their peers. However, on average, the attainment of these pupils is about two terms behind other pupils in the school and a year behind other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics by the time they leave the school. In writing, they are about half a term behind other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally. While these gaps are closing in some year groups, this pattern is not consistent. The additional spending is not yet being used effectively enough to help these pupils to catch up with their peers.

The early years provision

is good

- Children settle quickly in the school's Reception class, because the school plans well for their individual

needs and communicates well with parents and pre-school providers. Adults use the children's own interests and the questions they ask to plan activities that will engage them well.

- Children make good progress from their starting points and, by the end of the Reception year, are ready to enter Year 1.
- Teaching in the early years is well matched to children's needs, including those with complex needs or communication difficulties. Staff are well deployed and are skilled in assessing the children's progress and planning appropriate activities.
- The Reception classroom is an exciting learning environment and is well resourced. Children are helped to explore and to challenge themselves. For example, they thoroughly enjoyed working out how to instruct the programmable toys to move around the classroom and, with careful guidance, made very good progress.
- Children have daily access to an outdoor learning area, but this does not provide as many opportunities for actively acquiring skills in key areas including communication, number and physical development as indoors. These experiences are supplemented by trips to a nearby woodland area which offers many valuable opportunities for exploring and learning.
- Children in the early years behave well and develop their independence quickly, because routines are well established and activities are well planned. They grow in confidence, because they feel safe and know they will be well cared-for.
- Leadership of the early years ensures that the provision meets the needs of the children. However, leaders have not yet ensured the outdoor learning opportunities are fully realised.

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	109830
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	453420

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Holstead
Headteacher	Sharon Finn
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 March 2013
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