

# Liden Primary School

Liden Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 6EX

**Inspection dates** 29–30 January 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children make good progress in the early years because of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- The rise in standards since the last inspection demonstrates that all pupils now make good progress throughout the school.
- By Year 6, attainment in writing and mathematics is average, and above average in reading. These standards show that pupils achieve well.
- Improvement is due to the effective leadership of the headteacher and her determined effort to strengthen the quality of teaching through the appointment and development of other leaders.
- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. The headteacher and governors ensure that leaders with outstanding teaching skills use these well to develop other teachers.
- The headteacher, leaders and governors constantly support and challenge each other. Their competent leadership skills have quickly secured an effective and improving school.
- A lively approach to teaching and strong guidance in developing the right attitudes to learning support pupils well. As a result, their behaviour is good. They enjoy school and attend regularly.
- The school's work in keeping pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school, and discussions with parents confirmed this view.
- Systems to manage challenging behaviour have been successful and the school is calm and purposeful.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are not as high as they are in reading because pupils do not write often enough. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise different types of writing, especially the skill of writing at length creatively.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations and too readily accept work that is poorly presented. Pupils' presentation skills in all subjects, including mathematics are not good enough.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors looked at learning in 20 lessons and observed 13 teachers. Teaching assistants were observed working with individual pupils and small groups. The inspectors talked to pupils about their work and heard individual pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 read.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school’s analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. Records of checks on the quality of teaching were examined along with records of visits to the school made by the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ work across a range of subjects and classes, especially writing.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A meeting took place with the school adviser from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 22 online responses from Parent View and informal meetings with parents at the school during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Ross Newman

Additional inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Liden Primary School is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils attend from the local area.
- All children in the early years attend school full time and are taught in two Reception classes.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in three mixed-age classes. All other pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is significantly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is similar to that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- Most pupils are of White British Heritage.
- 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.
- The school offers the facility of a breakfast club.
- There is a privately run pre-school on the school site but it was not a part of this inspection.

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

- Improve standards in pupils' writing by providing more opportunities for them to use their writing skills daily to write at length creatively as well as factually.
- Raise teachers' expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' written work in all subjects, including mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Persistent disruption to staffing since the last inspection has been well managed by the headteacher. The previous issues of teacher underperformance have been tackled effectively.
- Safeguarding procedures are rigorously applied and have been strictly used to successfully protect pupils from emotional and physical harm.
- The school's system of 'guiding gems' has helped the whole-school community to develop a set of principles by which everyone can manage their behaviour and make decisions. The school is very strong in its insistence that this applies to everyone. This creates a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which to teach and learn, enabling pupils and adults to achieve their best.
- The headteacher and governors have secured capable senior teachers and, as a result, a strong leadership team has developed. Leaders consistently demonstrate high-quality teaching. They regularly share their skills, leading groups of three teachers to develop practice and share experience, especially in literacy and numeracy. This is inspiring confidence in teaching and resulting in better achievement for pupils. However, the school realises that there is still more to do, especially in developing pupils' writing skills.
- The curriculum offers some good opportunities for pupils to write within themes. The scrutiny of pupils' books showed that pupils do not write often enough or at sufficient length or across the widest variety of different types of writing. Consequently, this slows their achievement in writing. The school knows this and has plans in place to address the issue.
- The headteacher manages teachers' performance stringently. Regular checks on the quality of teaching have ensured that poor teaching has been eradicated. Where teachers require help to move their teaching from good to outstanding, support is provided quickly at both individual and whole-school level. This has been successful in improving teachers' skills and raising pupils' achievement. A good example of this is found in the school's plans to improve mathematics, which has led to rapid improvement in pupils' achievement.
- Good support and advice from the local authority and an educational consultant has helped the school to develop, when judging the quality of teaching, interrogating information about pupils' progress and planning priorities.
- Provision for disadvantaged pupils, those who are disabled and those with special educational needs is particularly well led and managed, promoting equality of opportunity. The school does not tolerate any discrimination. These pupils benefit from special programmes taught by skilled teachers and teaching assistants. The new 'tranquillity' room provides excellent facilities for pupils' emotional development. Parents particularly value the school's 'families' coordinator who offers help in overcoming some pupils' barriers to learning.
- Extra funding provided through the pupil premium is effectively used to provide trained adults to work with small groups of pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The curriculum provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school includes the study of other faiths. For example, through the theme 'Gods and Mortals' pupils study the different approaches to prayer and worship in the major world faiths. Pupils celebrate the festivals of different faiths and cultures. The school includes the experiences of the small minority of pupils from other cultures well. This enriches all pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures that live in modern Britain today. The theme 'What it means to be Global Citizens' highlights fundamental British values. These are also well taught through themes such as the study of World War 2.
- Lively experiences which stimulate pupils' interest ensure that they engage well in learning. For example, themes based on classic books such as *The Call of the Wild* stretch pupils' imagination and promote their good behaviour and attitude to learning. Pupils shared memorable experiences with inspectors about the visit of Husky dogs as the introduction to this theme. A correct balance across subjects is achieved through the careful organisation of the skills pupils need to learn. This prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils' personal and social development is further enriched by visits and visitors, especially the residential visits in each year group from Year 3 to Year 6. The residential visit to Morfa Bay, for example, encourages pupils to learn how to work together in teams, developing resilience and a spirit of adventure. Teachers are well supported by specialist teachers for music, French and sport.
- Through well-planned use of extra sport funding, pupils are improving their social skills by becoming Sports Ambassadors and Sports Captains and helping to run lunchtime sports for other pupils. The funding is also providing specialist teaching in dance, culminating in pupils performing at a local theatre. Teachers and pupils are learning new skills and benefitting from new resources. A wider variety of after-school

sports is resulting in a higher pupil interest and take-up, introducing them to the way sport can contribute to a healthier lifestyle.

#### ■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors consistently check the work of the school through links with teachers and classes, regular visits to the school, presentations from staff and reports from the headteacher. They keep well abreast of pupils' progress through school and national data. They enlist the help of the local authority and an educational consultant to help them keep an overall check on the school's progress. Through these mechanisms they offer a good level of both challenge and support to the headteacher. A governor has brought skills from the world of work to assist the headteacher with the development and management of teachers' performance in relation to pay. Through the rigorous systems in place they are fully aware of the quality of teaching and its impact upon pupils' achievement and what has been done to tackle underperformance and to reward good teaching. Governors are well trained and very responsive to the school's needs. They carry out their responsibilities with great diligence.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

#### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. School records show that positive strategies to deal with serious incidents of poor behaviour are successful, and exclusions are rare.
- The school's system of rewards, the 'guiding gems', successfully encourages pupils to think about and develop personal skills such as remaining focused on their work, cooperating with others, being part of a team, sticking at tasks until they are done, and being responsible for their actions. Adults adopt these values too and so are good role models for the pupils.
- As a result, almost all pupils behave well in groups and pairs during lessons and show a good attitude towards their work. Low-level disruption in lessons is exceptionally rare because all adults are very skilled at managing behaviour, and pupils find learning interesting and fun.
- Occasionally a very small minority of pupils become disengaged with their learning and so do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is why behaviour is not yet outstanding.
- Pupils behave well around the building and in assembly and are polite towards visitors, helpfully showing inspectors the way to classrooms. Almost all pupils get on very well together on the playground. A lunchtime club with a wide range of activities exists to support a very small minority of pupils who might find longer periods of unstructured playtime difficult.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given and learn important lessons about democracy when, for example, they are involved in looking after younger pupils, interviewing candidates for teaching posts, making choices about which charities to support and signing up to the home-school agreement.

#### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils told inspectors they feel safe in school and that any concerns they might have are always dealt with. Parents spoken to during the inspection confirmed this view.
- Pupils demonstrated a good understanding about the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and internet safety. They say incidents of bullying are rare. They 'fall out' occasionally but are very sure who to go to if they do experience a friendship problem. A pupil commented that 'staff listen to us and we can always talk to friends'.
- Pupils develop a good sense of how to keep safe and secure because of the opportunities provided by the school to involve them in activities such as assessing risks when on residential or day visits.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is typically good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are well taught.
- A good example of this was seen during the inspection in a mathematics lesson investigating fractions. Pupils in Year 3 clearly demonstrated their good prior learning through their ability to reason and make connections between halves, quarters and thirds of a chocolate bar.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were well prepared for writing activities. They spent time talking through their

ideas with the teacher, rehearsing information. They expertly constructed a checklist together of what must be included in their writing, for example capital letters, full stops, finger spaces and adjectives. As a result, they were confident and keen to write and produced good-quality descriptions about Koala bears.

- Although writing skills are well taught, especially grammar, punctuation and spelling, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not applying these skills sufficiently on a daily basis so they are not making the progress of which they are capable. Pupils practise their writing most often in factual accounts, letters and reports. Fewer opportunities exist for them to develop writing at a greater length.
- Reading in small groups with the teacher and interrogating stories and information in books on a regular basis are contributing well to pupils' above-average standards in reading.
- Teachers make it very clear what pupils are to learn in the lesson and explain tasks very clearly. They question pupils carefully to assess their understanding. This information is skilfully used, sometimes to adjust tasks within lessons and sometimes to inform future plans for learning.
- Pupils pay careful attention and settle quickly to their work. Almost all pupils concentrate and behave well because they know what is expected of them.
- Pupils are interested and keen to learn because lessons are practical, stimulating and well organised, resources and equipment are ready and tasks are challenging.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop good 'self-help' skills. Displays on walls containing basic information support pupils well in their learning tasks. Year 4 pupils were observed competently using dictionaries to assist them with their reading tasks.
- Teachers mark work thoroughly. Pupils know and understand that green marking means they have done well and met their learning target. Pink marking indicates that work is in need of improvement. Pupils are given time to respond to the 'think-pink' marking and must make improvements to their work before moving on. This is establishing in pupils a firm responsibility to learn from their mistakes and be ready for the next steps in their learning.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' written work. Poor handwriting detracts from the quality of writing, and untidily laid out mathematics often results in unnecessary mistakes.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Teachers in Years 1 and 2 ensure that pupils build thoroughly on the good skills they have learned in Reception and, as a result, they achieve well. Standards in Year 2 have risen since the last inspection and are currently average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress in reading is good. The most able readers in Year 2 read well with fluency and expression. They show a clear understanding of the story or information in their books. Less able readers confidently use their knowledge of letters and sounds and picture clues to help them when they are stuck.
- By Year 4, pupils possess good levels of comprehension and further strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. For example, they work out more difficult words by missing the word out and reading the sentence for meaning to gain a clue as to what the word might be. The school's well-developed reading culture means that by Year 6, pupils read for pleasure and enjoy talking about their favourite authors.
- Since the last inspection, standards have risen. In 2014, standards in Year 6 in reading were above average, and were average in writing and mathematics. School information shows that standards in mathematics in the current Year 6 are improving rapidly. This year more pupils are reaching the higher Level 5 than in 2014.
- Pupils' attainment is not as high in writing as it is in reading because they do not practise enough daily to help them consolidate their writing skills.
- In 2014 the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was similar to that of other pupils nationally in reading, one and half terms behind in writing and three terms behind in mathematics.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 against other pupils in the school was half a term behind in reading, one and half terms behind in writing and two terms behind in mathematics. This year the gap in attainment between other pupils in the school and disadvantaged pupils is similar. It has not closed but this is because a significant proportion of the disadvantaged pupils also have complex learning difficulties. This affects levels of attainment.
- The majority of the most able pupils who reached a Level 3 in reading and mathematics in Year 2 reached a Level 5 in Year 6 in 2014. A small group of pupils reached a Level 6 in mathematics. Thirteen pupils who did not reach Level 3 in writing in Year 2 all achieved a Level 5 in Year 6. This shows that the most able pupils make good progress.

- Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is specifically tailored to improving their learning and development difficulties. They are well catered for with appropriate help such as specialised speech and language programmes, extra work with sounds and letters to develop reading and strategies to improve basic number skills.
- The progress of all groups of pupils is carefully tracked and school information shows that they make good progress from their various starting points.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children begin school with fewer skills and less knowledge that is typical for their age. They have specific weaknesses in communication and language, number and physical development.
- Children make good progress and achieve well because of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. By the end of the Reception year the percentage of children reaching a good level of development is close to that expected nationally. The skills they gain in the early years prepares most children well for Year 1.
- Inspectors observed teachers building strong relationships with parents, who are warmly welcomed at the start of the day. They are encouraged to stay and join in children's chosen activities, becoming real partners in their child's development. Parents were observed helping children to strengthen their pre-writing skills, for example by posting coins through a hole, mark making, and counting pasta.
- Reception is well led and managed. Children respond well to adults and settle quickly into their safe, secure surroundings. They are very well looked after. Well-established routines mean that children respond quickly to instructions quietly and without fuss so that behaviour is good.
- Children in Reception are focused and fully engaged when learning their letters and sounds, confident with sounds and actions and keen and able to read words on sight.
- During a number session children were adept at counting forwards and backwards. They rose to the challenge taking turns and, alternating faultlessly by picking up the next number. Children joined in these number games with great enthusiasm and, as a result, they learned rapidly.
- The early years classroom is thoughtfully planned and engaging so children are motivated and excited about the activities on offer. Guidance is provided for adults in each area of learning, including the aims and key vocabulary for the activities. As a result, when children choose their own learning, adults ensure they make the best possible use of the stimulating and challenging experiences.
- A 'Pirate' theme currently threads seamlessly through all areas of learning and the characteristics of effective learning are well represented. Resources and adult intervention encourage them to explore, think creatively and solve problems through, for example, role play, painting, sand and water, books and mark making.
- Careful observations are made and accurate assessments kept of children's learning, and teachers use these to shape the next steps in children's development. A full record of each child's first year is compiled. Parents make valuable contributions to this, illustrating how well their children are learning at home.
- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good rather than outstanding because most children are making good rather than rapid progress at acquiring the skills and knowledge that they need to be fully successful in Year 1.

## 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>	131901
<b>Local authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	453824

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	294
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Mundy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vikki Marsh-Ballard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11–12 April 2013
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