

# Lodge Farm Primary School

Mobbsbury Way, Chells, Stevenage, SG2 0HR

**Inspection dates** 24–25 February 2015

<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		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Leaders have not improved the quality of teaching across Key Stage 2 quickly enough. They do not hold teachers rigorously to account for the progress that their pupils make.
- The governing body does not check the work of the school effectively or challenge senior leaders to make the rapid improvements in teaching that are needed.
- Leaders do not give staff sufficient opportunities to learn from the effective practice of other teachers.
- Teachers do not always set work that is difficult enough for pupils of average and high ability in Years 3, 4 and 5, so such pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers in Years 3, 4 and 5 do not always give pupils precise guidance on how to improve their work, extend their skills and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers in Years 3, 4 and 5 do not ensure that all pupils have reading books which are challenging enough to improve their comprehension and inference skills.
- Teachers in Years 3, 4 and 5 do not consistently check that pupils apply their spelling and grammatical skills accurately enough when writing.
- Teachers do not give pupils at Key Stage 2 enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to solve practical problems.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children get off to a good start in the early years because teaching is good and the learning environment is stimulating.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout Key Stage 1. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and all pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress from their starting points.
- Disadvantaged, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress because they receive good support from teachers and other staff.
- Pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress since the start of the year.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils and adults get on well together in this harmonious community and pupils are keen to learn.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are well cared for. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe in different situations.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, and they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 parts of lessons. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the two co-headteachers. Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons and looked closely at the work in their books.
- Inspectors met three groups of pupils and spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, with the acting Chair of the Governing Body and two other members and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school. They examined several documents including those concerning pupils' achievement and progress, development plans and information about teachers' performance. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Minutes of governing body meetings were considered.
- Inspectors considered the 67 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered the 41 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

David Radomsky, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Edel Gillespie	Additional Inspector
Paula Masters	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in care) is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- Most pupils come from a White British background.
- The early years provision comprises a Nursery class for three-year-old children who attend part time in the morning or the afternoon, and two Reception classes for four-year-olds, who all attend full time.
- 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 has a co-headship arrangement, whereby the headship is shared. The substantive headteacher leads the school for four days each week and the co-headteacher is in charge on the fifth.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a large turnover of staff and governors. Following the resignation of the Chair of the Governing Body at the start of this term, the Vice Chair is now leading the work of governors in an acting capacity. A number of governors are new in post and there remain four vacancies on the governing body.

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

- Improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress, especially across Years 3, 4 and 5, by ensuring that teachers:
  - always set pupils work that is hard enough to enable them to reach the highest standards of which they are capable, especially in the case of pupils of average and high ability
  - consistently make clear what pupils need to do in order to extend their knowledge, deepen their understanding and improve their work
  - give pupils texts that are appropriate to their ability and that will strengthen their comprehension and inference skills
  - check that pupils use their grammatical, punctuation and spelling skills accurately in all their writing
  - provide more opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems have more opportunities to learn from the effective practice of other teachers.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
  - leaders use performance management processes rigorously and set challenging targets for teachers in order to improve teaching and accelerate the rate at which pupils make progress
  - governors check the work of the school thoroughly and challenge senior leaders to quickly improve the quality of teaching and achievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have not improved the quality of teaching across Key Stage 2 quickly enough. As a result, not enough pupils have made sufficient progress to reach the standards of which they are capable in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- Performance management processes are not rigorous enough to ensure that all teaching is good or better. Appraisal targets set for teachers are not consistently aimed at securing at least good progress for all pupils. Insufficient attention is given to identifying the individual specific aspects of teaching practice that need improving to help deliver better achievement. Staff with a leadership responsibility are not consistently held to account for how well they improve the quality of teaching and achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- The two co-headteachers and all other leaders have made improvements in other aspects of the school's work. They have markedly increased the frequency with which they observe lessons and check work in pupils' books. This had led to good improvements in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and continued good and improving provision in the early years. Disadvantaged pupils, those who are disabled or who have special educational needs make good progress across the school as they are well supported. These successes demonstrate the capacity of senior leaders to secure improving standards.
- Teachers, including those new to the profession, are now benefiting from the school's well-planned training programme, which is helping them improve their performance. The staff support the school's goals and feel that they have the opportunities they need to develop their skills as teachers and leaders. They do not however, have sufficient opportunities to learn from the effective practice of other teachers, for example by observing outstanding teaching in other schools.
- Leaders have continued to improve pupils' behaviour since the last inspection. They have ensured that new procedures for rewards and sanctions are fully understood by all staff and pupils and that they are consistently implemented. The work done with the pupils in making these changes has ensured that pupils behave well at all times, are able to work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and harmony and have positive attitudes to learning. Discrimination is not tolerated and pupils learn and play together well and feel secure.
- Subject leaders are working purposefully to implement the new curriculum. They share ideas regularly with colleagues in other local schools. They support their colleagues' planning and check how well they are implementing new learning programmes. The leaders of literacy and mathematics, alongside senior leaders, are working well with the local authority in implementing new methods for assessment following the discontinuation of national curriculum levels.
- The curriculum offers pupils a good range of exciting learning and enrichment opportunities. It does not however, always allow all pupils equal opportunity to achieve well because work is sometimes too easy.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are encouraged to reflect on what is right and wrong and to understand the challenges facing key historical figures, such as Anne Frank. Through the taught curriculum, assemblies, visitors and visits to places of worship they learn the importance of valuing and respecting other groups and cultures, for example in the Key Stage 1 presentation on 'Christmas Around the World.' Older pupils explore how different religious groups express their beliefs through music, art and prayer. Pupils learn about democracy, for example through electing a pupil leadership team. In this way, pupils develop a good understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used well. As a result, from their starting points, these pupils make good progress across all key stages.
- The primary sports funding is used well. The school participates in a local sports partnership and employs an apprentice to offer expertise and to work alongside teachers in the school. He organises additional sporting clubs, which has increased pupils' participation in sport, and he teaches a course, currently to

Year 5, on healthy living. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the local sports festivals with other schools. As a result, pupils are developing their physical fitness and understanding of how to live a healthy life.

- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. As a result, pupils are safe and feel safe and staff know what to do if they have any concerns.
- The local authority has provided good support in helping the school improve its provision for early years, the quality of teaching in Year 1 and in introducing new assessment systems for English and mathematics.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- A number of experienced governors, including the chair and some with educational expertise, have left the governing body in recent months. This has reduced the effectiveness of governance. Governors recognise the need to fill the vacancies with suitable candidates and provide training to improve the effectiveness of the governing body.
- From the headteachers' reports governors have some knowledge of the pupil performance information but do not fully understand how to identify and challenge leaders when underperformance is not addressed quickly enough. A designated governor however, keeps a sharp eye on the spending of the pupil premium and ensures it is helping eligible pupils to make good progress.
- Governors are well informed about the outcomes of teachers' performance management reviews. They are prepared to seek clarification from the headteachers about how well teachers are teaching before increasing salaries. However, they have an overgenerous view of the quality of teaching and have not taken sufficient notice of how it has not improved standards over time at Key Stage 2. They do not therefore ask sufficiently challenging questions of the leadership about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are welcoming to visitors and are polite to one another and to adults alike.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and display a keenness to succeed. From the early years onwards, they learn to share and to work well together in pairs or groups. On the odd occasion, pupils become a little restless if the work does not interest them. Staff manage behaviour well and so the pupils are soon back on task.
- Behaviour around the school is good. Pupils wear their uniform with pride and the school is virtually free of litter.
- Pupils welcome the opportunities to take responsibility. For example, in Reception, pairs of children take responsibility for setting up and tidying up different areas in the classroom. Older pupils are trained as peer mediators and help other pupils sort out their disagreements. House Captains lead their houses in organising fund raising events for a range of charities of their choice.

### Safety

The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school because they know that the staff care for them. Pupils know about different types of bullying and say that is rare. They are confident that when it does occur, staff deal with and resolve the issues quickly and competently.

- School staff ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe at school and in the wider world. Pupils have a good awareness of the dangers of the internet and older pupils benefit well from the day's training that the school provides at a local centre on a broad range of safety issues.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently above average. Pupils understand that good attendance is important in helping them to be successful learners.

**The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable, especially across Key Stage 2. This means that not enough pupils make good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable at the end of Year 6. This is partly as a result of the large turnover of staff and long term absence.
- Teachers do not always give work to pupils, particularly those of average and high ability, which challenges them to expand their knowledge and think deeply. This restricts their progress.
- Teachers regularly mark work and highlight what pupils have done well and where they have made mistakes. However, although some marking is very effective and is leading to better progress, for example in Key Stage 1 and in Year 6, in other cases, the comments on how to improve are superficial and do not help pupils understand precisely where they have gone wrong and what they need to do to put it right.
- The teaching of reading is not effective enough in Key Stage 2. Although reading is taught daily, the books that older pupils choose for their own reading are not checked by adults to ensure that pupils are tackling appropriately challenging texts. In class, the activities set to develop pupils' comprehension skills are sometimes too easy. As a result, progress is slowed. In contrast, in the early years, phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) are well taught. The ready availability of many books in the setting, and encouragement of home reading with parents, encourages children to become confident and enthusiastic readers. Reading skills continue to be well taught at Key Stage 1 and any pupil having difficulties receives good quality additional support. As a result, pupils attain good standards by the end of Year 2 but do not build sufficiently on their good progress subsequently.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. At Key Stage 2 pupils do not consistently use correct grammar, punctuation and spelling in all their writing activities and not enough pupils take full advantage of the good opportunities they receive to write at length and to edit and improve their writing.
- In mathematics, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop and use their mathematical skills in other subjects and apply them to real life situations. This slows their progress across Key Stage 2. In recent years the teaching of mathematics has improved considerably at Key Stage 1. Teachers have introduced a variety of helpful resources and create good quality investigations that motivate pupils to apply their skills and solve problems. As a result, although pupils now reach good standards at the end of Year 2, their progress falters in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- Good relationships in the classrooms ensure that pupils happily get on with their work and little time is wasted. They are keen to learn and work hard to please their teachers and other adults in the classrooms.
- Displays in the classroom are used very well to celebrate pupils' achievements. 'Pegs of Pride' are used to display work that pupils are most proud of. They are encouraged to think, articulate and justify why they are proud of their chosen piece when discussing their choices with senior leaders. Displays also demonstrate the breadth of the curriculum and are used to encourage good attitudes to learning, such as resilience. Some useful points of reference displayed on the walls help to support pupils in the learning of English and mathematics.

**The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- Achievement needs to improve as progress across Key Stage 2 is not yet good and standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are not high enough.
- Standards reached at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were broadly average in reading writing and mathematics and well-below average in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. This does not represent good progress from their starting points in Year 3, especially for pupils of average ability and the most able.
- Standards reached by the most able pupils at the end of Year 6 have not been high enough over time. This is because they have not always been given hard work to challenge them to make good or better progress. The most able pupils receive a good level of challenge in the early years and in Key Stage 1 and

here their achievement is good. As a result, at the end of Year 2 in 2014, the proportions reaching the higher Level 3 were above national average in reading and writing and well-above in mathematics.

- School data and work seen in pupils' books confirm the school's view that pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress since September because of the consistently good teaching and support that they are receiving.
- In the 2014 Year 1 national phonics screening check, a broadly average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard. Since the previous inspection standards reached in all subjects at the end of Year 2 have increased and are now average overall in writing and above average in reading and mathematics.
- Across the year groups, disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make consistently good progress. This is because teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to plan lessons and specifically to identify well-targeted support for those pupils who may be struggling or needing additional support.
- The few disadvantaged pupils in the school make good progress from their starting points, often making faster progress than their peers. In 2014, at the end of Year 6, they were about one year behind their classmates and other pupils nationally in reading. In writing, they were about 14 months behind their classmates and 18 months behind other pupils nationally. In mathematics, they were 18 months behind their peers and other pupils nationally. These attainment gaps widened considerably on the previous year because the majority of the eligible pupils in 2014 started in Year 3 with very low prior attainment. Their rates of progress from their starting points however, were faster than their peers and other pupils nationally in reading and writing. In mathematics, rates of progress were slower.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills in communication and language which are below those typically found for their age. Because of the good teaching and support that they receive they make good progress in all areas of learning. The proportion leaving Reception with a good level of development is average and, as a result, pupils are well prepared to enter Year 1.
- Children settle quickly into the early years because the staff make sure they know a lot about the children by meeting with them and their parents before they start school. Parents are encouraged to share with staff any information about their children's activities, interests and learning at home. Staff keep parents well informed about the progress their children are making. As a result, parents are happy that their children are achieving well in a safe and caring environment.
- Children behave well. They learn to share equipment, are kind towards other children and display good manners. Routines are well established and children quickly learn to listen to and follow instructions. They are able to work and play in a safe and harmonious environment.
- The early years setting is well led and managed. Leaders and staff have benefited from the good advice from the local authority and from visiting an outstanding setting to learn from best practice. As a result, they have recently created a new exciting outdoor learning environment which provides children with stimulating activities throughout the day. The building shed, mud kitchen, and animal surgery for instance, make a strong contribution to children's imaginative learning.
- Good planning and regular assessments mean that activities are well targeted so that children of all abilities are supported well and challenged to make good progress. Adults engage in dialogue with pupils continuously to model good language and to encourage children to think. There are also plentiful opportunities for children to read and write. Children therefore quickly learn to communicate confidently, they become eager learners who are keen to tell adults about their learning and express their views.



## 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>	132091
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	456059

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	467
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lindsey Butterworth (acting)
<b>Headteachers</b>	Helen Turner and Sue Padfield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01438 236600
<b>Fax number</b>	01438 236601
<b>Email address</b>	admin@lodgefarm.herts.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2015

