

Long Lane Primary School

Long Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6YG

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

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

- The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher, provides a clear focus on improvement and, as a result, achievement is rising. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Pupils feel safe and secure due to excellent safeguarding arrangements.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years and make good progress.
- Teachers' marking is very thorough and provides detailed guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work in all subjects. Plentiful opportunities are provided for pupils to respond to the marking. Pupils use these opportunities well to improve their work.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. Pupils' progress from their various starting points is good.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have positive attitudes, enjoy coming to school, work hard and have good relationships with each other and with adults.
- Governors know the school very well and contribute to formulating the school's values and aims. They challenge the school rigorously about its performance.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well through the range of subjects taught. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give pupils enough time to practise and apply new skills.
- Recently appointed middle leaders have not yet had the opportunity to make sufficient impact on progress in their subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, eight of them jointly with senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors made a number of shorter visits to lessons and attended a whole-school assembly.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in all classes, held formal meetings with two groups of pupils and met informally with other pupils in the playground. They held discussions with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, senior and middle leaders, and other staff. They met with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of 85 parents and carers were analysed through the 'Parent View' website. In addition, inspectors spoke informally to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors sampled pupils' work. Some pupils read books with the lead inspector.
- The views expressed by the 17 staff who responded to the staff questionnaire were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at a variety of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, and the school development plan. They analysed checks on pupils' attainment and progress, behaviour records and attendance data. They considered details of the monitoring of teachers' performance, and policies aimed at keeping pupils safe.

Inspection team

Jan Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carole Skinner

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2.
- Children in the early years attend full time in Reception class.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Numbers of pupils from other ethnicity groups are below national average with pupils of mixed White and Black Caribbean being the second largest group.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is well below the national average. This funding is for pupils who are eligible for free school meals and pupils who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of learning by making sure pupils are given enough opportunities and time in lessons to practise and apply new skills.
- Develop the role of middle leaders by ensuring they are fully involved in improving the quality of learning and teaching in their subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides determined and effective leadership of the school. Since the previous inspection, he and the deputy headteacher have established a strong and determined team of school leaders and staff who have high expectations for all pupils.
- The local authority has been strongly involved in supporting the school since the last inspection. Their challenge and guidance has helped inform the changes that have proved to be effective, particularly in supporting recently appointed middle leaders.
- Leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement across the school, demonstrating strong capacity for continued improvement.
- Senior leaders' rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and accurate checks of the school's work give all teachers and the governing body a clear understanding of the school's performance, including in the early years.
- Improvement planning is sharply focused on tackling identified weaknesses. This is seen, for example, in the successful appointment of new middle leaders to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science.
- The leadership of teaching is good and the school places a high priority on improving teaching through good quality training and robust, detailed monitoring. Leaders check teachers' performance regularly and use the information gained from lesson observations and from analysing pupils' progress to set teachers' targets for improvement. Teachers understand clearly that decisions about promotion and pay rates will be based on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
- Staff with subject leader responsibilities analyse progress data to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in key areas such as reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are becoming increasingly effective in contributing to school improvement planning procedures. They are not yet fully involved in conducting lesson observations or providing coaching for staff in order to improve pupils' achievement
- School leaders have taken full account of the demands of the new curriculum and are phasing in new assessment arrangements. These are intended to build on well-established systems that identify pupils who may not be doing as well as expected or to extend those with the potential to achieve highly. The range of subjects taught is broad and balanced, meets pupils' needs and aspirations, and prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about Christianity and other faiths in religious education and through whole-school assemblies. Visitors to school and educational visits add to the pupils' experiences, with residential trips focused on team building and raising self-esteem a favourite among pupils. Together, these opportunities result in good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Additional funding is used to good effect to support disadvantaged pupils and ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress during their time at school.
- Additional sports funding is used well to improve the quality of teaching in physical education and to increase the variety of sports on offer. This, in turn, has added to the success of school sports teams in inter-school tournaments.
- School leaders' work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Procedures for identifying and reporting any safeguarding issues are very thorough. Leaders liaise well with other agencies to provide the best possible support for those who are vulnerable and their families. Parents report that their children are very happy to come to school. They feel their children progress well and all commented on how approachable the staff are. Parents who have experienced problems or concerns report that the headteacher is particularly supportive.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are well informed and committed to driving the school forward. They have recently reviewed their effectiveness and changed much of their way of working to become more active in the day-to-day activities of the school. They have a clear grasp of the school's strengths and what still needs to improve for the school to become outstanding. The Chair leads the governing body in analysing the school's performance and comparing it with schools nationally.
- Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching. They frequently visit the school to find out for themselves how well it is performing. Governors set the headteacher targets and assure themselves that teachers' appraisals are carried out effectively.
- Governors carefully consider all spending, including the pupil premium, and have seen impact in improved

outcomes for pupils eligible for this funding. Recently appointed 'class link governors' report back to the governing body on how effective the newly developed National Curriculum is, and how it is helping to prepare young people for life in modern Britain. They are proactive in managing the performance of staff effectively and rigorously, ensuring that the salary progression of staff is justified by a sound evidence base.

- Governors ensure that arrangements to keep children as safe as possible are effective and up-to-date. As a result, safeguarding arrangements fully meet current requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils work with enthusiasm and enjoyment in lessons. Most have very positive attitudes to learning which contribute to their good progress. They support each other well, for example, when working with a partner or discussing ideas in a group.
- Pupils listen carefully to others and respect each other's views. They are usually courteous and considerate to each other and to adults. Very occasionally, some pupils become over exuberant, which results in calling out and dominating class question and answer sessions. In most lessons, this was dealt with effectively by adults reminding pupils of the school rules.
- Behaviour as pupils move around inside the school building is good, and often, exemplary. This is because adults are consistent in their expectations of how pupils should conduct themselves in school. Pupils are very clear about the school's system of rewards and sanctions, and know the consequences of making wrong choices.
- Behaviour outside school at playtimes and lunchtimes is good because pupils get on well together. Older pupils support younger pupils well, for example through 'peer mentor' roles. Staff, parents and pupils agree that standards of behaviour are good.
- Pupils enjoy having responsibilities in school, particularly being appointed as 'science technicians', librarians and 'peer mentors'. They say everybody is very kind and they are proud of the way pupils welcome new members to school.
- Pupils' books show that they take a great deal of pride in their work in all subjects.
- Absences are followed up promptly and, as a result, attendance is above average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Rigorous checks are carried out on all adults to make sure that they can work with children. Thorough policies to keep children safe are in place. Regular staff training ensures staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in this respect.
- All pupils feel extremely safe and are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and very effectively. They are understanding of pupils who occasionally get angry in school and recognise that these pupils may have difficulties and need support from adults and counsellors in school.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about different forms of bullying, such as name-calling, cyber-bullying and racist behaviour that can take place, and know how to deal with it. They say that bullying in school is exceptionally rare and that any incidents are very quickly dealt with. Pupils would not hesitate to tell an adult if they had any concerns. Detailed school records support this.
- To help pupils keep themselves very safe, a range of courses and visits are organised, including 'bikability' courses, road safety talks and visits from local police and fire services. Pupils are very keen to make sure others, particularly younger pupils, feel very safe in school. Older pupils apply, and are interviewed, to become 'peer mentors' and actively support younger pupils in the playground and promote safety.
- Pupils described their school as a 'kind' school where new pupils are all welcomed and helped to settle in.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good across school. As a result, all pupils are making good progress.
- Teachers often use skilful questioning to encourage pupils to think harder, or give a fuller explanation for their answers, which extends their learning. Pupils are given time to consider and deliver their answers, and discussions with partners help them to formulate their ideas clearly.
- Pupils learn particularly well when teachers plan activities that capture their imagination and engage them

in learning. For example, there was great excitement when Year 3 and 4 pupils returned from assembly to find their classroom had become a crime scene following the 'theft' of their 'Iron Man' models. Teachers encouraged pupils to express their feelings, which they did using an impressive range of vocabulary. Pupils then created snappy headlines for their newspaper articles.

- Marking is a strength across school. Teachers mark pupils' writing and mathematics work to a consistently high standard. They provide detailed comments and guidance that help pupils to improve their work and extend their skills. Pupils say this advice is very useful, and they respond to it in detail. The quality of marking helps pupils to make good progress in all subjects and is consistent in all classes.
- Teachers communicate their good subject knowledge clearly and effectively. Some teaching assistants have high levels of expertise and provide high-quality support for pupils of all abilities, including the most able.
- Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to the challenges set. Year 5 pupils say they enjoy working in mixed-age classes as it gives them the opportunity to progress further and match the achievements of the Year 6 pupils. They say teachers give them work that matches their abilities, and this was evident in all classes and reflected in the progress seen in pupils' books.
- Occasionally, pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise new skills. Teacher examples are clear, however, there is not enough time for pupils to try things out and practise for themselves. This means pupils' grasp and ability to apply new ideas are not developed as well as they might be. Pupils in some classes are not clear how new learning links to what they already know and can do. This hinders the progress pupils make.
- Well-trained teaching assistants are deployed effectively to promote learning in lessons and to support individual pupils who need additional input. Those assistants who have extra qualifications are well matched to activities. For example, teaching assistants are specifically trained to deliver particular programmes to improve reading and writing.
- Pupils with additional needs make good progress because they are well supported both in the classroom and through the teaching of specific skills to small groups.
- The most-able pupils in Key Stage 2 say they enjoy being set harder tasks particularly in mathematics, both in lessons and through additional tuition. Pupils are very well aware of what they need to do to achieve the next level.
- Teaching in mathematics is typically good with pupils being challenged through problem solving and applying their mathematics skills independently. Teachers assess pupils throughout lessons to ensure pupils understand what they are doing and know how to improve.
- The teaching of reading is good, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils are motivated to read books for themselves because teachers regularly use interesting texts when planning lessons. This fosters an enjoyment of reading. Communication between home and school is clearly documented with parents' comments helping staff to know how well pupils are doing in their reading at home and keeping parents informed of their child's progress.
- The teaching of phonics in Key Stage 1 is effective, including for those pupils who are taught by teaching assistants. Pupils say they enjoy reading, and they read confidently, fluently and with understanding.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the early years with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. All children make good progress, so that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development in 2014 was well above the national average. Children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress in using phonics (the sounds that letters make) when learning to read. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the national standard in the 2014 phonics check at the end of Year 1 was well below the national average and not representative of pupils' ability.
- Pupils read accurately. The most-able pupils read with fluency and expression. When meeting an unfamiliar word, pupils tackle it confidently using their phonic skills successfully. This fosters an enjoyment of reading.
- By the end of Year 2, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. The school identified that some pupils could be making better progress in Key Stage 1 and have taken steps to address this successfully. Currently, pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress and evidence in their books supports this.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2. As a result of the school's increasing efforts, an increasing number of pupils are working at and reaching the higher levels. This is ensuring that current above average standards by the end of Year 6 are continuing to rise.

- The attainment of the most-able pupils in Key Stage 2 was above the national average in 2014. Boys did particularly well in mathematics and reading, and girls were stronger in writing. This is a result of the strong teaching that continually challenges pupils to improve.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress because of the carefully planned wide-ranging support they receive from teachers and well-trained teaching assistants. The progress made by these pupils is regularly reviewed to ensure that any additional help is having an impact on raising their achievement.
- The school has been successful in reducing the gap between the small number of disadvantaged pupils (just two in Year 6 in 2014) and other pupils both in the school and nationally. In 2014, these pupils did better than their classmates and better than other pupils nationally in writing and were in line with their classmates and other pupils nationally in all other subjects. The school's information shows that this trend is continuing.
- Pupils enjoy sport and are enthusiastic about physical education. The additional sports funding is used well to employ a specialist physical education teacher in partnership with other local primary schools. Pupils reach good standards in the subject, and their skills are further enhanced in after-school activities and clubs such as tag rugby and street dancing. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to take part in competitive team games in school and with other local schools. Pupils' experiences in physical education and sport also contribute well to the development of their social skills, health and well-being.

The early years provision

is good

- Children of all abilities and groups make good progress and achieve well in the Reception class as a result of the consistently good teaching they receive.
- Links with parents are strong. Well-planned procedures to welcome children as they start involve parents from the outset and ensure that children settle quickly and happily.
- The well-equipped outdoor learning area is rich in resources to support the development of reading, writing, number and shape as well as exciting children's curiosity and imagination. Tasks are well planned around themes and children participate in the activities with great enthusiasm.
- Teachers organise a range of exciting activities that interest the children, make learning fun and help them develop a wide range of skills. They appropriately take into account children's own interests. In one session children enjoyed 'cooking' biscuits in a small group and had a good discussion about why flour needed to be sprinkled onto the table before rolling out the dough.
- Through a good balance of well-planned activities, adults teach children important skills; for example reading, writing, mathematics and opportunities for children to explore, investigate and choose activities for themselves.
- The Reception class teacher works closely with the headteacher, to monitor the quality of teaching, maintain good-quality provision and to identify where improvements are needed.
- Adults work effectively to ensure children make good progress. They check and record individual children's progress daily and use this information effectively to plan next steps for children's learning. Occasionally, staff do not have a clear enough picture of how well children are learning when they are playing. This means some learning opportunities throughout the day are not recognised or recorded.
- In Reception, children are extremely safe and well cared for. They are encouraged very effectively to do things for themselves and learn how to keep themselves safe in school.

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	109853
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	455567

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Lowery
Headteacher	Peter Thorne
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2013
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