

Saxon Primary School

Briar Road, Shepperton, TW17 0JB

Inspection dates 2–3 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
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 executive principal and the headteacher lead the school with a relentless drive. They communicate a deep and genuinely strong vision for every pupil to achieve their full potential, and they drive improvements very successfully.
- Leadership at every level is highly effective. Most teaching staff have responsibilities beyond their own classrooms. They are seen as potential future school leaders and expectations of them are very high.
- Both the governing body and the Trust's board of directors are committed and active in their roles. They know the school well and support and challenge school leaders very effectively.
- The leadership and management of the quality of teaching are highly effective and drive improvements strongly. Leaders at every level play a part in this, offering well-targeted support and guidance where required.
- Teachers understand pupils' learning needs very well and provide good opportunities for them to make good progress, including through exciting experiences outside the classroom.
- Pupils in the early years benefit from a rich and stimulating learning environment. They make very good progress because of the quality of provision available for them.
- The achievement of pupils is good and improving quickly and very securely, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils are now making significant gains in their learning, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, because of the good teaching and the excellent support they receive.
- Disabled pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs also make good progress due to the quality of teaching they receive.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in classrooms is good. They enjoy the rich opportunities for learning offered to them and they are very proud of their school.
- The school's work to ensure pupils' well-being and safety is exemplary. Staff take their responsibilities very seriously and they are tenacious in their efforts to keep children safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Sometimes teachers do not offer all pupils, particularly the more able, very high levels of challenge to ensure they make as much progress as they should.
- Pupils are sometimes unsure of what to do to improve their work because teachers are not consistent or effective in the way they communicate this.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, covering all classes, six jointly with school leaders.
- Discussions were held with pupils, parents and carers, the executive principal, the headteacher, middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair, the Chair of the Board of Directors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils’ books, heard pupils read, observed pupils around the school and at break times, visited an assembly and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, taking into account the 64 responses to the online parent questionnaire and one letter from a parent. Responses to the 40 questionnaires returned by staff were also considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents and records including those for safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body and the Trust board, records of visit by the local authority, pupils’ attainment and progress data supplied by the school, the school’s evaluation of its own performance and the school development plan.

Inspection team

Clive Close, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Alan Taylor-Bennett

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Saxon Primary School is an average-sized primary school which is growing to become a two-form entry primary school. Currently there are two Reception and two Year 1 classes, and single classes in all other year groups.
- It became an academy and joined the Lumen Learning Trust in October 2014. When the predecessor school, also called Saxon Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall. The Lumen Learning Trust consists of two partner academy schools: Saxon Primary School and The Echelford Primary School. Each academy has its own headteacher, with both academies led by one executive principal.
- In September 2013, the school was accredited by the National College for Teaching & Leadership as a National Support School. Many staff here support other local schools in a wide range of ways.
- The executive principal is a national leader of education (NLE) and there are five specialist leaders of education (SLE) on the staff of the school.
- The headteacher is on maternity leave. Nevertheless, she attended many of the meetings held during the inspection. During her absence, the role of headteacher is being covered by an acting head of school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding) is around the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is slightly above the national average, with a relatively high proportion of pupils from the Romany or Gypsy community.
- Pupils in the Reception classes attend full time.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils making outstanding progress in all subjects by:
 - ensuring that teaching gives all pupils, particularly the more able, opportunities to experience high levels of challenge which require them to think deeply
 - making sure that feedback to pupils from all teachers about how to improve their work meets the standards of the best currently seen in the school, and enables pupils to know exactly how to move on
 - eliminating the remaining gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- This is a school where leaders at every level convey a strong sense of purpose and are deeply passionate about the progress and success of the pupils in their care. The executive principal knows the school extremely well and has been relentless in her drive to improve standards and develop the individual talents of each pupil. The headteacher shares this strong vision of success for every pupil; their working partnership drives the very significant improvements taking place in the school.
- Senior leaders regard the school as being at the heart of the community and there to serve all of the children within that community, no matter what their circumstances or background. They carry out this responsibility very successfully. They have an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in the school. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, and a detailed development plan drives school improvement in the key areas of teaching and the progress of pupils.
- Work to improve further the quality of teaching is led highly effectively. All teachers are required and supported to refine their skills and there is a wide range of opportunities to share outstanding practice. Senior leaders judge the quality of teaching accurately, and they are perceptive in their analyses of individual teachers' strengths and development needs. Strong subject knowledge is constantly nurtured in all teaching staff.
- The performance of teaching staff at every level is closely monitored by the governing body and board of directors of the Trust. Targets are closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement and drive the professional development of all staff very successfully.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively and is causing the existing gaps in achievement and attainment of disadvantaged pupils to close rapidly. Because of this, the school is now in a position to completely eliminate any shortfall in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The school has a strong track record of tackling inequality and discrimination, and promoting very good relationships. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are respectful of each other's beliefs and cultural heritages. Older pupils are knowledgeable and keen to share their opinions of the benefits of democracy and the rule of law, and able to relate these key aspects of fundamental British values impressively and confidently to their day-to-day life in school.
- Because of the excellent development opportunities available, middle leadership in the school is very strong. Many of the teaching staff hold professional qualifications awarded by the National College for Teaching and Leadership, and most hold responsibilities for specific areas of the curriculum or other aspects of leadership and management. This allows the school to address its own priorities confidently, and to support other local schools, including its trust partner school, very effectively. This high-quality leadership throughout the school gives it an outstanding capacity to improve further.
- The school's curriculum is well structured and delivered, and is very well suited to the needs of its pupils. Opportunities to learn outside of the classroom are cleverly and effectively woven into every subject in each year group to support good learning and pupils' welfare and well-being. These include residential trips and educational visits that enrich the wider curriculum and bring learning to life. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were keen to share their experiences of camping and bushcraft, including cooking kebabs on an open fire, and the outdoor adventurous activities week where they enjoyed being challenged to achieve personal targets set by specialist instructors.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are outstanding. They fully meet statutory requirements. Staff are rigorous in their efforts to keep pupils safe and are resolute in ensuring that any pupils at risk are monitored and supported at an appropriate level. Relationships with outside agencies and other professionals are very effective. Staff follow up any aspect or concern they have and have an attitude that 'nothing is too small a worry' when it comes to the safety of pupils in their care. Concerns about individual pupils are tracked assiduously at the frequent meetings of care and support staff.
- Steps taken to improve attendance and punctuality have had a massive impact over a sustained period of time. Over the last three years, levels of absence, including persistent absence, have fallen to well below national averages and have continued to fall this year.
- The school makes tremendous efforts to reach out to parents and help them to support their child's learning. Home learning is used well and any pupils that might need further help are able to attend special sessions provided by staff on a weekly basis.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about nearly all aspects of the work of the school. They appreciate the care that staff show for their children, and they are pleased with the progress their children are making. Very nearly every parent who completed the online Parent View questionnaire said that their child was happy at school, and a very large majority would recommend the school to other parents.

- Relationships with the local authority are strong and effective, both in terms of their impact on the school through the support for governors and school leaders, and with regard to the support which the school itself supplies to local authority maintained schools. Support for the governing body in appraising and managing the performance of the executive principal and headteacher has been particularly useful, as was moderation of internal school data to confirm the strengths and areas to develop in pupils' progress. Support from the academy Trust is good and has been crucial in establishing the roles and responsibilities of the governors, and the impact of the governing body's highly successful work is directly linked to the very good depth of knowledge and experience available to them from this source.
- The physical education and sports funding is spent very effectively. The school employs a sports premium mentor who helps staff with planning, skills progression and assessment. Staff feel more confident in teaching physical education (PE) and pupils are now benefiting from a wider range of sporting opportunities, including lunchtime and after-school clubs. Attendance at after-school sports clubs increased by more than a third last year and the school's latest survey of pupils in Key Stage 2 has seen a substantial rise in the number of pupils who say they enjoy their physical education and games lessons.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors play a very effective part in the outstanding leadership of this school. There are strong links and good communication between the governing body and the Lumen Learning Trust. The Chair of the Governing Body is a director of the Trust, and two members of the governing body are appointed directly by the Trust. Careful recruitment has ensured that there is a range of expertise available on the governing body in order to offer strong and effective support and challenge to school leaders.
 - Individual governors have oversight of different aspects of the work of the school. All are aware of the quality of the teaching and the impact this has on the progress pupils are making. Governors have a clear understanding of the process of teacher appraisal and performance management and ensure that only the best teachers are rewarded with pay rises and that school leaders act quickly to tackle any underperformance. They know the school well and are involved in the process of self-evaluation and monitoring of all the key aspects of its improvement, scrutinising performance data carefully. They are knowledgeable about the key priorities in the school's development plan, playing a full role in ensuring that targets and milestones for improvement are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes and are very proud of their school. They are kind to each other and respectful to adults, and are allowed to enjoy the freedoms to be energetic and have fun when the time is right.
- Pupils play happily together at break and lunchtimes. The playground is set up well for this and pupils are carefully managed and supervised at all times. A group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils expressed their delight at being able to play responsibly in different areas of the playground; they said they feel trusted and enjoy the sense of responsibility this gives them.
- Pupils particularly like the behaviour support systems that encourage them to 'stay on green'. They feel that bad behaviour in classrooms is now rare. Provision for the welfare of pupils has had a very positive impact on behaviour over time.
- Pupils display good attitudes to learning. In the few instances where pupils lose focus, it is usually due to a lack of challenge in the work they have been set. Disruption is very rare and is tackled in such a way as to reduce any adverse impact on anyone, including any pupil whose behaviour requires improvement.
- The number of exclusions is low; this sanction is used exceptionally and wisely.
- Attendance has been improving for several years and is now above average. Staff have worked tirelessly to encourage parents to send their children to school and this is now paying dividends.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Systems and structures are very strong and staff are keenly aware of their responsibilities to protect pupils and keep them safe. Child protection procedures are robust and staff have been appropriately trained to mitigate risks. The welfare of pupils who are deemed to be particularly vulnerable is monitored very closely. Staff are very aware of processes and procedures, and will always respond quickly to situations that they feel need resolving urgently.
- Staff in school work very closely with a wide range of outside agencies. A dedicated home-school link worker maintains a regular and reliable flow of information about all concerns with relevant agencies.
- Older pupils display a sophisticated knowledge of what could constitute bullying and how to tackle this problem if it ever occurs. They say bullying is now a very rare occurrence. They have, in their own words,

'done loads of anti-bullying work' and are 'very sure' of what bullying is. They were particularly keen to share that they never label people bullies, preferring to allow people to redeem themselves and learn from their mistakes.

- Pupils' understanding of risk is supported well by the curriculum. They are aware of the need to stay safe while using the internet and social media for instance, and benefit from a wide range of visiting professionals to highlight the dangers posed by, for example, water and railways.
- Parents feel their children are very safe in school. One parent told inspectors that 'there is always someone there for the children'. Another parent expressed the view that children were 'looked after well'. An overwhelming majority of the parents who used the online Parent View questionnaire said that their child feels safe in school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Nearly all of the teaching is good and some is outstanding. This drives good progress, especially in reading and mathematics and, more recently, in writing.
- Pupils benefit from the work of dedicated and knowledgeable teachers and teaching assistants, who make learning engaging and fun. There is a real drive among teachers to ensure pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds make rapid progress with their learning, and they are increasingly well supported to do so.
- The teaching of mathematics is a real strength in the school. Pupils display a good level of mathematical skills, particularly those pupils who achieved higher National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 2. Those pupils in danger of falling behind receive excellent extra help from a specialist teacher, which contributed to a large proportion of pupils making good progress over Key Stage 2 last year.
- There are strong systems and structures in place to support the few pupils who are falling behind with their reading. The school employs a teacher to support these pupils and this vital resource is used well because the correct pupils are targeted at the right time.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils but sometimes the level of challenge is not as high as it could be for more-able pupils. When this is the case, opportunities to deepen understanding are missed.
- Writing has been an area for development in the school this year. Because of this, pupils are now making much better progress. Teachers demonstrate writing well and constantly challenge pupils to improve their work. A number of initiatives are also playing a significant part in helping pupils develop their writing skills, including publication of their own newsletters and having their own writing published and reviewed online. The school also employs a storyteller to enrich pupils' literacy experiences, with pupils 'taken to places in their own imagination'. This has helped pupils to take advantage of the language-rich environment in the school, allowing them to further develop their own ideas and use them into their own writing.
- Sometimes, teachers do not make it clear enough for pupils to make connections and understand fully why they are doing certain tasks, for example when 'next steps' highlighted in marking are not well understood by pupils. When this happens, progress is slower than it could be. School leaders are aware of this and more work is planned in order to develop this important aspect of teaching.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities to consider and question their wider contribution and responsibilities as members of society. Teachers weave aspects of cultural and religious education into the wider curriculum in a meaningful way. Consequently, pupils have well-developed ideas of how to respond to discrimination or intolerance in their own school and are well prepared as they move forward into secondary education.
- There are good quality working relationships between pupils and adults. The support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is a particular strength with high expectations from teaching and support staff that all pupils will make secure progress, even when the steps in learning are inevitably very small.
- Pupils are very positive about their teachers and the support they receive in the classroom from all staff. They think that teachers make them work hard most of the time, and enjoy the varied enrichment opportunities that are part of the everyday curriculum at Saxon Primary School.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' progress is accelerating, with significant gains now being made across the school. School leaders have ensured that all staff realise that the progress of all pupils is a key priority. The result of their drive and determination to communicate this message over time is now reflected in this better achievement.
- Due to the very good support and the targeted interventions they receive, the progress of disadvantaged

pupils is accelerating. Gaps in achievement compared both with other pupils nationally and other pupils in the school have closed rapidly over a sustained period of time. Last year attainment gaps were less than the equivalent of a term in reading and mathematics, and slightly more than a term in writing when compared to other pupils nationally. The gaps within school were less than a term for reading and one term for mathematics and writing. School leaders and teachers are working hard to ensure any remaining shortfall in the standards these pupils reach is eliminated.

- Progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 is now better than that of most pupils nationally, particularly in mathematics and writing, despite their having arrived at the school at levels lower than typical nationally. This means that this year, pupils' attainment is likely to exceed national averages in all three subjects, and especially in mathematics and reading, building on the success of last year's national test results.
- Historically, pupils have made better progress in reading and mathematics than in writing, but staff have worked hard to address this imbalance and current achievement in writing is now significantly better, especially in Year 6.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 are now making better progress than in the past, especially in mathematics. Published data from 2014 show that pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below national averages by the end of Key Stage 1. Because of the better progress now being seen, the school is confident that this position will improve this year, bringing the school closer to national levels.
- Pupils leave the Reception classes well prepared for the more formal curriculum of Year 1. In the past, pupils have joined the school at levels significantly below those typical for their age, with some cohorts of pupils weaker than others. Because of improvements in teaching and the drive for pupils to make rapid progress, this situation is improving.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is a strength in the school. Pupils successfully build on the good provision in the Reception classes so that a higher proportion of them reached the levels expected in their phonics check at the end of Year 1 in 2014 than did nationally. The school expects this to be repeated this year.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is good and improving, although these pupils could still achieve more. In mathematics, the most able pupils do well, with a high proportion making better than expected progress in national tests in 2014. Their achievement was not quite as strong in reading and writing, but steps taken this year to accelerate progress are proving successful in narrowing the gap.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. In some year groups their achievements match those of other pupils, particularly in mathematics. Teachers and support staff plan work that matches the needs of these pupils well, challenging them individually to do their best.

The early years provision

is good

- Children in the Reception classes make good progress from their starting points. In previous years many joined the school at levels below what would be typical. This is no longer the case and this year's cohort joined at levels more in line with those typical. Last year, despite their lower starting points, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development exceeded national levels by the end of the year. Predictions for this year are for a further increase in the numbers of pupils achieving a good level of development, representing continued good progress.
- In this year's cohort, most of the few children who joined at levels lower than those typical have made rapid progress, meaning that the vast majority of children will leave the early years well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is at least consistently good; some is outstanding, and most teaching skilfully develops the learning of the children. Staff know the children well and usually use their knowledge to plan next steps for each child. Ongoing assessment of children's progress is strong; support staff have been trained well to record the steps in progress children make. On occasion, teaching is less effective because children are not helped to be clear enough about how to move their learning forward. Communication between the class teachers and support staff is a strength and, because of this, planning for each child's next steps is effective.
- Children behave well and enjoy the activities that are planned for them. The learning environment is vibrant and exciting and children are encouraged to make full use of the equipment and resources available to them. During the visit, children were confident to explain what they had learned about coral reefs and the creatures that inhabit them; others wanted to talk about the model sharks they were making and talked confidently about the simple sentences they had written to describe what happened at feeding time on the reef.

- Children are well cared for in the Reception classes and all aspects of safety are carefully thought through. The classrooms and communal areas, including the well-resourced outdoor area, are well organised and supervised and children moved between rooms and activities in a measured, sensible way.
- Leadership and management of the early years are very strong. An experienced teacher heads the small team of staff that is relatively new. Because of her support and guidance, including a package of bespoke training, they provide well for the children in their care.
- Parents are very positive about the progress their children have made since joining the school. They appreciate the opportunities they are given to find out about what their children are learning and say communication is very good.

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	140250
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	450350

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Sedgwick
Headteacher	Mrs Bonnie Davis (Headteacher), Mrs Mary Ellen McCarthy (Executive Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01932 563035
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