

Lawns Park Primary School

Chapel Lane, Old Farnley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS12 5EX

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- In recent years there have been significant staffing changes, which have led to an uneven quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders' action plans, though detailed, do not focus sharply enough on pupil outcomes for specific groups at expected or higher standards.
- Leaders acknowledge differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. These vary between year groups and subjects.
- Outcomes at the end of Reception have been variable and in 2017 they declined. Over time, boys' achievement has been lower than girls'.
- Over time, outcomes have not been good enough. In the past, too few pupils, particularly boys and disadvantaged pupils, have made good progress from their starting points.
- In 2017, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics fell into the bottom 10% of all schools nationally.
- Too few pupils, particularly the most able pupils, reach the high standards in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1 and 2.
- The wider school curriculum is broad and balanced, but does not provide pupils with opportunities to deepen their knowledge and develop their subject-specific skills consistently.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, are honest in their self-evaluation. They know what needs to be done for the school to be good and are determined to do so.
- Subject leaders are new to post and are taking the required actions to improve pupils' outcomes. Consequently, pupils across the school are making stronger progress.
- Despite the staffing turbulence, leaders have nurtured a strong and cohesive staff team. Morale is high and staff are keen to embrace change.
- Pupils are well behaved and demonstrate good manners. They are proud of their work and keen to share what they are doing.
- Parents are positive about the school and feel their children are happy and safe.
- Pastoral support for pupils is a strength of the school. Inclusion is a strong feature and central to the school's ethos.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership further by ensuring that:
 - improvement plans are linked closely to the gains in outcomes for pupils and groups of pupils, at both the expected and the high standard, ensuring that key milestones are identified by which to judge success
 - new subject leaders receive time and support to sustain the improvements in their subjects
 - ongoing plans to refine the assessment arrangements for subjects beyond English and mathematics are completed.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further by ensuring that:
 - activities are planned to enable pupils to deepen their subject-specific skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics
 - recently introduced approaches to the teaching of reading and writing are fully embedded and consistently applied in all year groups
 - teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Increase the proportions of pupils reaching and exceeding age-related expectations by the end of Foundation 2 (Reception), Year 2 and Year 6, particularly the most able and disadvantaged most able pupils, by ensuring that:
 - differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers reduce significantly
 - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set work that challenges pupils to think hard about their learning
 - there are increasing opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding in subjects beyond English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has managed considerable staffing disruption, which has affected most year groups. Associated recruitment difficulties have compounded the problem. This has impacted upon the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school and over time has weakened subject leadership. Consequently, in 2016 staff were not prepared well enough for the demands of the new curriculum nor were pupils prepared for the new testing arrangements. Leaders, including governors, acknowledge the legacy of underachievement that this created. There is now evidence that subsequent actions are improving pupils' outcomes and strengthening teaching across the school.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher proactively sought support from the local authority advisers and colleagues in neighbouring schools who had been successful in adapting their curriculum. This work is now paying dividends as assessment is secure and is usually used to plan for pupils' needs effectively.
- The headteacher is honest and accurate in her view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders are committed to the school and to improving pupils' outcomes rapidly. They have tackled weaknesses in the quality of teaching successfully.
- Subject leadership is strengthening as the staff team stabilises. Recently appointed subject leaders demonstrate the skills, knowledge and expertise required to ensure that teachers are able to deliver quality learning experiences that meet the needs of pupils effectively. They provide effective advice and support to colleagues, so that plans demonstrate an appropriate progression of skills that reflect the raised expectations of the national curriculum.
- Whole-school improvement planning is detailed and is tied closely to accurate assessment evaluation. Actions identified are appropriate, time-specific and monitored by the wider leadership team. Leaders set overall targets for improvement to ensure that pupils' progress will be good. However, targets are not precise enough to measure successful progress of key groups of pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged most able, aiming at the higher standards.
- Leaders, including governors, invest heavily in quality training opportunities for all staff. Such is the ethos of the school to nurture and support their colleagues that staff morale is high. Leaders have built a strong and cohesive team who are ready for the challenges ahead.
- Systems to check the work of teachers are in place. Historically, leaders have used these systems to tackle weak teaching effectively, but have not had the capacity to follow up weaknesses as robustly as they would have liked. The involvement of the recently appointed subject leaders has strengthened this aspect of leadership. Staff now receive precise and detailed feedback, which is followed up in a timely manner. This is securing rapid improvement in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils currently in the school.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is organised so that links between subjects are made whenever it is appropriate to do so. This provides pupils with a meaningful context in which to learn. The curriculum is enriched successfully with a raft of visits and visitors. Work seen in pupils' books indicates that the activities planned are in line with age-related expectations and cover all statutory requirements. However, some activities become additional English exercises and do not fully extend pupils' subject-specific skills and thinking. Leaders have identified this as an area for further improvement.
- Links with parents are strong. Parent ambassadors work closely with school leaders to strengthen links and support community activities. A dedicated inclusion officer supports some of the most vulnerable families and signposts them to external agencies successfully. Parents are generally supportive of the school and say that their children are happy and feel safe.
- Pupil premium funding is used to support pupils' emotional and social needs effectively, providing access to the breakfast club, a range of after-school clubs and visits. Historically, it has not been targeted well enough to diminish the differences between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of other pupils. Leaders, including governors, recognise this and accordingly have organised a cohesive programme of intervention and booster sessions. It is too early to determine the overall impact of these, but those observed during the inspection were focused and supporting pupils' achievement successfully.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used effectively. It is also used to provide a range of booster clubs and interventions to support individual pupils' needs. As a result, this group of pupils are making strong progress.
- The funding for physical education (PE) and sports is used wisely. There are strong links with external providers, which strengthens the core offer for PE and extends the range of after-school clubs and competitions pupils can access. As a result, the quality of teaching in PE is good and pupils are developing an increasing awareness of personal fitness and staying healthy.
- Leaders ensure that the fundamental British values of respect and tolerance are embodied within the school's ethos.

Governance of the school

- Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise to their roles and use them to support and challenge school leaders. Minutes of governing body meetings clearly reflect the extent of purposeful questioning, particularly in relation to the link between teachers' performance and pupils' outcomes.
- Governors play a full role in monitoring the work of the school, which means they have an honest and accurate understanding of the school's overall effectiveness. They are committed to the school and provide clear direction for the future.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Leaders have ensured that staff are appropriately trained and are fully aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe. Thorough checks are made on the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work with children. Minor omissions from the school's single central record were put right during the inspection.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and that there is a trusted adult in whom they can confide should they have any issues. Older pupils were able to explain how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and when using social media. Some of the younger pupils expressed their concerns over the limited cloakroom space. Recent changes to the organisation of cloakroom access are ensuring that this space is managed effectively.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Leaders have strongly improved the quality of teaching by providing quality training and coaching, precise guidance for planning sequences of learning and through effective monitoring. However, some variability still remains.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving. There is now a clearer focus upon developing all pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills alongside arithmetic fluency. The use of practical apparatus to support pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts is now an expectation, although it is yet to be consistently embedded. Leaders recognise that teaching needs to include reasoning and problem-solving as core elements of the teaching sequence for all pupils, rather than extension activities. More challenge is also needed for pupils who are secure in their methodology and ready to grapple with more demanding problems as soon as they are ready.
- Historically, the teaching of writing enabled pupils to be functional writers by the time they left key stage 2, but it did not develop in pupils, particularly boys and the most able, the skills to be successful at reaching the higher standards. Leaders have tackled this weakness and raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can and will achieve.
- Quality texts provide a stimulus to engage pupils, particularly boys, in the writing process. For example, pupils studying 'The iron man' in Year 4 applied similar techniques of the author in their own writing. There is also now a firm expectation that pupils will develop such skills and improve their own writing through editing and redrafting. As a result, the improvement in pupils' writing since the start of September is marked and teaching is moving pupils towards higher standards effectively.
- Over time, the teaching of phonics has been effective and standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check broadly reflect the national average. Leaders have changed their approach this year, so there is a greater emphasis on pupils using their phonics to spell. Although it is too early to gauge the impact on pupils' outcomes overall, evidence in pupils' books shows that they are applying their skills to write unfamiliar words plausibly.
- Although pupils access recommend books from the school library and many volunteers support early reading, pupils' deeper reading comprehension skills have not been developed effectively. Subject leaders identified this weakness in the 2016 outcomes and have provided additional training and guidance to teachers. The 2017 assessments showed that more pupils were able to correctly answer the more challenging questions

at both key stage 1 and 2. Work to prioritise these higher-order reading skills is ongoing.

- The teaching of subjects beyond English and mathematics is instilling in pupils a love of learning. Pupils talk excitedly about their new knowledge and the many visits and residential trips they experience. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able pupils, to think hard about their learning and extend their subject-specific skills. Leaders recognise this is an area for further improvement.
- The teaching of PE, art and personal and social education are strong features of the school's provision. Teachers plan activities that build upon pupils' skills effectively. They model key skills successfully so that pupils know precisely what is expected. As a result, pupils make good progress from their starting points in these subjects.
- Teaching assistants have benefited from appropriate training and have developed their skills in using questions to support and guide learning. They are most effective when offering focused one-to-one sessions that target specific gaps in learning or tackle misconceptions.
- Homework is regular and covers the basic skills. Pupils are clear about the expectations for them to complete their homework and are supported when this is not the case.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Older pupils are well informed about the dangers associated with using social media and keeping themselves safe on the internet.
- Pupils are confident to tell an adult any worries or concerns they may have. For example, younger pupils shared their concerns over the cloakroom and toilet area during unstructured parts of the day. As a result, leaders made adjustments to the way pupils transfer between lessons and this is now orderly and calm.
- Pupils are developing mature attitudes to bullying and understand all of its forms. They are clear that it happens, but that the adults will sort it out straight away.
- Pupils are taught to be respectful of others and teachers do not shy away from discussing sensitive issues such as abuse and homophobia in an age-appropriate way. As a result, pupils demonstrate mature attitudes to others and are thoughtful in their discussions.
- Pupils are well mannered and welcome visitors with broad smiles. They hold doors open for adults and their peers and are keen to share 'Good morning.' They take pride in their work, are keen to talk about their learning and like to share their successes.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and fewer pupils struggle to attend regularly than is found nationally. A dedicated inclusion officer supports some of the most vulnerable families to ensure that their children attend well.

- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are developing increasingly effective skills to self-assess and to reflect upon their work. They are responsive to their peers and have many opportunities to work collaboratively. There is a strong sense of belonging in the school and identification with the 'Lawns Park Way!'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils understand the expectations for them to behave well and as a result there are very few instances of poor behaviour.
- Staff are effective in dealing with the most vulnerable pupils and offer therapy and support to enable all pupils to be fully involved in the life of the school. It is testimony to the ethos and commitment of leaders that Lawns Park is an inclusive school that welcomes all pupils.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and are proud of their achievements. However, there are times when pupils are passive in lessons and wait for adult support. Staff are encouraging pupils to become more self-reliant and resilient in their learning, so that they are better prepared for the next stage of their education.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over time, pupils' outcomes in key stage 1 and 2 have not been good enough and in 2016 they fell into the government's definition of a 'coasting school'. The provisional outcomes for 2017 saw a marked improvement in the proportions of pupils reaching the expected and high standard in reading and mathematics. However, pupils' progress in these subjects and writing was in the bottom 10% of schools nationally.
- Published data would suggest that pupils' outcomes are inadequate. However, work seen in the books of current pupils is already showing significant improvement in reading, writing and mathematics since the start of term. The school's own assessment information also shows improvements that reflect the work seen in pupils' books. This bodes well for the future.
- Leaders are rightly concerned and have instilled in staff a determination to turn things around rapidly. Although some underachievement is still evident, focused work with individual pupils is helping them to catch up in their learning. Overall, pupils are now beginning to make rapid progress.
- There are above-average proportions of disadvantaged pupils and their progress is equally variable. In some instances, their attainment is higher than that of their peers, but this is not widespread. Leaders have a detailed action plan in place to support further learning and target misconceptions. Early indications show that these pupils are also making stronger progress and developing their reading, writing and mathematical skills effectively.
- Only a few pupils, mainly the most able, including the most able disadvantaged, reach the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the case in both key stages. Leaders acknowledge that this is a priority for improvement.

- Leaders have rightly focused on rapidly improving pupils' outcomes in English and mathematics. However, this means that pupils' progress in other subjects is variable, with few pupils working at the higher standards consistently.
- Standards in the phonics screening check in Year 1 have improved steadily over time. Support is provided for those pupils who fall short of reaching the required standard and by the time they are rescreened in Year 2, most pupils have caught up.
- Pupils' outcomes in PE are good. Pupils achieve well, because of carefully targeted support and well-considered provision.
- Interventions for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are timely and matched closely to pupils' needs. There is a wealth of multi-agency involvement that guides and supports the school's provision. Work in pupils' books demonstrates improvements to their outcomes.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The majority of pupils who enter Foundation 1 (Nursery) have skills and abilities that are typical for their age. A significant minority enter with skills that are below those typically seen, particularly in their personal development. By the time children start in Foundation 2 (Reception) the vast majority are demonstrating skills that are typically expected.
- Over time, outcomes for children at the end of Reception have been broadly in line with the national average, which represents expected progress. In 2017, outcomes dipped slightly and were below those of 2016. Gaps between boys and girls were wide across all areas of learning, but specifically in reading and writing.
- The early years leader has responded by adapting provision to accommodate children's needs, particularly those of boys, more successfully. Children's interests provide starting points for planning activities that stimulate all children into discovering new things about the world around them. The unit offers plentiful opportunities for children to 'mark make' for a purpose. This is paying dividends as children, including boys, are more able to sustain interest and are keen to talk to visitors about what they are doing. Early indications would suggest that more children will reach and exceed a good level of development in 2018 than in previous years.
- The large early years unit is home to both Nursery and Reception children, who share the many and varied activities both inside and outdoors. While these free choice activities are undoubtedly engaging for young children, learning purposes are not always clear, particularly for the older and most able children. Adults' questioning, while effective in clarifying children's understanding, does not routinely extend children's thinking.
- Learning journals capture the special moments of children's learning. Adults are skilful in gathering children's contributions successfully. Leaders accept that the next step is to engage parents more fully in the process.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and in keeping with those of the school. Procedures for monitoring the number of children in the setting at any one time have now been tightened, following discussion with inspectors.

School details

Unique reference number	107973
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10037720

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Donna Kellett
Headteacher	Mrs Rebecca Ford
Telephone number	01132 637364
Website	www.lawnsark.org.uk
Email address	info@lawnsark.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 December 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average and varies considerably within year groups.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion supported by an education, health and care plan is very low.
- In 2016, the school was notified as being within the government's definition for coasting schools in relation to pupils' progress measures.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Many of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of pupils' books (from both the last and this academic year), school assessment information, leaders' evaluation of teaching and learning and a range of school documents.
- Inspectors held meetings with the local authority's school improvement adviser and head of service and three members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils formally and informally in classes and during playtime and lunchtime. A number of pupils from key stage 1 and 2 read to inspectors.
- The inspection team scrutinised the school's website, minutes of the governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors took the views of parents into account through the 47 responses from Parent View, the online Ofsted questionnaire for parents, and through discussions with several parents who spoke to inspectors at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Diane Buckle, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lyndsey Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Don Parker	Ofsted Inspector

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