

Inspection of Liden Primary and Nursery School

Liden Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire SN3 6EX

Inspection dates: 5–6 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Teachers' expectations for pupils are not high enough. The curriculum is not planned and delivered sufficiently effectively to give pupils the depth of knowledge they need. Leaders know the quality of education has not been good enough. They are taking strong action to tackle weaknesses. Many pupils are catching up on the learning that they have missed in the past.

Pupils' behaviour in class is improving well, but it is not yet good. Most pupils have a positive work ethic and try hard. However, sometimes pupils do not stick at learning when their work is too easy or too hard for them. These lapses of concentration slow pupils' learning down.

Pupils are usually kind and thoughtful. They play well together. Pupils are safe, and most enjoy school. When bullying happens, staff deal with it. Pupils get help and support when they need it.

Staff think carefully about enriching pupils' learning. For example, they take pupils sailing and to museums. More pupils are taking part in extra-curricular activities because there is something for everyone. Pupils enter regional mathematics challenges and young writers' competitions and experience success. Pupils are proud of their 'best work' and their giant class sculptures of book characters displayed around the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Many parents recognise that the school needs to improve. The school is, however, recovering well after a significant decline in its effectiveness. Leaders have tackled a myriad of complex problems all at the same time. Now that many of these things are resolved, leaders' work to improve the quality of education pupils receive is taking hold well. However, the quality of education is not yet good.

Leaders' work to improve the way that the curriculum is planned and delivered across a full range of subjects started last year. The headteacher is prioritising training for subject leaders so that they have the knowledge and skills to lead their subjects well. Some subject leaders are already checking what pupils learn, but it is early days for others. In some subjects, such as science, design technology, and computing, pupils have not learned enough in the past.

Leaders have brought about greater consistency in teaching across the school. As a result, pupils are learning more and doing better. However, teachers do not use their assessments well enough to identify what pupils need to do next. Sometimes teaching misses out important steps in pupils' learning. Consequently, too few pupils write with the complexity that is expected.

There has been some chopping and changing of approaches to teaching, for example in mathematics. Pupils are gaining greater fluency in their mathematics now. However,

leaders have not yet ensured that all teachers have strong mathematical subject knowledge.

The school's approach to teaching early reading is making a positive difference. Pupils who fell behind last year are getting the right support to catch up. Increasingly, these pupils read accurately but they are not confident or fluent yet. In Nursery, children enjoy singing and sharing stories. Further up the school, teachers carefully select books to study. Teachers help pupils gain a better understanding of what is happening in the books they read and why. However, some pupils are not avid readers.

Children are getting off to positive start in Reception. However, adults in the Nursery do not interact with children well enough to get them talking or enhance their physical development. Staff do not maximise learning time in the Nursery.

The special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) leaders are ensuring that teachers are planning work that is better meeting pupils' abilities. However, there are still some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, who need extra support because they have underachieved in the past.

Staff apply the school's behaviour policies well. As a result, poor behaviour has reduced sharply in the last year. However, pupils' learning is still disrupted occasionally.

Leaders have put additional plans in place to bolster pupils' personal development. However, there has not been enough time for pupils to build on these better experiences. Pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures is too limited. Pupils do gain positive experiences through charity work and volunteering in the local community.

Leaders have needed to upgrade school systems. Regular changes to school policies and guidance have added to staff workload. However, staff say that it is getting better this year. They value the training they receive and identify that this is an improving school.

Governors are carrying out some parts of their roles to a satisfactory level. However, they do not challenge leaders stringently about improving the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have taken rapid action to improve the safeguarding systems and processes in the school. They responded promptly to local authority advice. As a result, policies, staff vetting procedures and staff training related to safeguarding now meet requirements. Induction for new staff is thorough. Staff apply their training quickly to reduce pupils' risk of harm. However, a few aspects of administrative record-keeping are not as good as they could be. Nevertheless, leaders are quick to identify when pupils are at risk. They make swift referrals to other agencies and follow these up to ensure that pupils are safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not yet enabled all pupils who fell behind in the past to catch up. Some pupils with SEND, and those who are disadvantaged, still underachieve. Leaders should ensure that teachers use their assessments of what pupils know and can do, so that pupils' gaps in knowledge are removed. Leaders must ensure that all staff have strong subject knowledge in mathematics and writing.
- The headteacher does not have a sharp focus on the impact of the curriculum in the Nursery. Leaders have not ensured that staff interactions with children are good enough; this hinders children's opportunities to practise speaking. Leaders must ensure that children's learning time is maximised, and all Nursery staff get the training they need.
- The headteacher must ensure that the school's curriculum is ambitious across a full range of subjects. Leaders have ensured that subject plans set out clearly what pupils should learn. However, the depth of what is taught and learned falls short of this. The headteacher must ensure that each subject is taught in depth, in line with the national curriculum. Subject leaders' work needs to gather momentum so that weaknesses in the delivery of their subjects are remedied. Leaders should ensure that pupils gain sufficient knowledge of religion and different cultures.
- Governors ask relevant questions and check on many of their statutory responsibilities. However, they need additional help and support so that all governors gain the requisite knowledge and skills. Governors must hold leaders to account stringently for the quality of education pupils receive, so that it becomes good. This is fundamental to ensuring that standards do not slip again in the future.
- Leaders have ensured that the teaching of phonics and early reading this term is precisely focused on pupils' abilities. While many pupils who fell behind last year are catching up, these pupils are not yet confident readers. Leaders must ensure that the reading curriculum is bolstered further, and pupils become fluent readers who demonstrate a strong understanding of what they read.
- There are still occasions when pupils' learning is disrupted in lessons. This happens when pupils do not get access to the right work. Leaders must ensure that the work on offer is closely matched to pupils' abilities so that they have every opportunity to learn well.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	131901
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10086893
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	464
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Parker
Headteacher	Jeff Mason
Website	www.liden-pri.swindon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 January 2015

Information about this school

- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2017. There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection. The headteacher has appointed a deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and subject leaders.
- The governing body is much smaller than it is supposed to be. It has found recruiting governors difficult in the past.
- Since the last inspection a Nursery has been added and so the age range has changed. The school has provision for two- and three-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- The lead inspector held a meeting with three members of the governing body. She also held telephone conversations with the corporate director for children's services in Swindon and the senior primary commissioner for education in Swindon.
- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and special educational needs coordinators. We also met with subject leaders and

teachers new to the profession and talked to a full range of staff during the inspection.

- We checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively. We talked to pupils and staff about the culture of safeguarding in the school. We also reviewed pupils' exclusion records.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, English, mathematics, science, design technology and physical education. This entailed discussions with subject leaders; visits to lessons; looking at examples of work; discussions with teachers; discussions with pupils and listening to pupils read.
- We gathered the views of parents. The lead inspector considered the 39 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. She also reviewed the school's internal parental survey. The lead inspector considered the staff and pupil survey as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

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