

# Longfields Primary and Nursery School

Longfields, Bicester, OX26 6QL

**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress across the school.
- Teachers have high expectations, which are achieved. They plan well to provide good challenge to pupils in lessons.
- Skilled teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils feel safe, behave well and thoroughly enjoy school. They enjoy taking responsibility in lessons and are willing to try out new things without fear of making mistakes.
- The lively and engaging curriculum makes learning exciting and motivates pupils to do their best.
- Good leadership has resulted in rapid improvement over the last two years.
- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have improved the school rapidly because they are knowledgeable about priorities for development and are not willing to accept second best.
- Senior leaders have a good track record for developing teaching through their careful monitoring and support.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although pupils' progress in writing is improving it is not yet as good as that in reading and mathematics. This is because phonics (letters and the sounds they make) are not taught systematically enough in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- The school has a wealth of data but the headteacher takes too much responsibility for analysing this, limiting the involvement of teachers in checking that their pupils are all doing well enough over time.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 25 lessons of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- They held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met informally with parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day and took account of the 40 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own assessment data, the self-evaluation summary, planning and monitoring documents, the raising attainment plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspectors analysed 28 questionnaires from staff.

## Inspection team

Gay Whent, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Mike Capper

Additional inspector

Alison Lamputt

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes and part time in the Nursery.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. All pupils are educated on the school site rather than at any alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is below average but increasing. Most of these pupils speak Portuguese as their home language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra government funding through the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Ensure that progress in writing is consistently good across the school by:
  - providing training for staff in the teaching of phonics
  - ensuring that phonics are taught systematically across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that the headteacher shares responsibility more widely for checking pupils' progress and analysing test results so that teachers are more knowledgeable about how well their pupils are achieving over time, and can adapt their planning to meet pupils' needs even more accurately.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils start school in the Nursery a significant number are working at lower than expected levels for their age. From these starting points, pupils achieve well and make good progress across the school.
- Since the last inspection there has been a successful focus on ensuring that all pupils make good progress. As a result, pupils' attainment is rising and it is now broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- In the Nursery and in the Reception Year, children settle quickly and the focus on supporting their personal, social and emotional development is very effective. Children show good independence in lessons, for example when exploring how a ball rolls down guttering or when matching words to pictures on a computer.
- There are no significant differences between the progress made by different groups. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because work is carefully matched to their needs and they are well supported both in and out of lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well because teachers are conscientious about ensuring that they understand new vocabulary as soon as it is introduced.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress as their needs are identified accurately and effective strategies are put into place to aid their learning. For example, the use of the pupil premium to pay for additional staff and to ensure that pupils are taught in small groups for literacy and numeracy lessons is successfully closing the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils.
- Across the school, pupils are encouraged to develop good communication and literacy skills. They are encouraged to read widely and they do so confidently. Pupils are articulate and speak confidently to adults as well as to each other.
- Pupils' writing skills are improving but progress is not as consistently good as in reading and mathematics. This is because phonics are not taught systematically enough in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to apply their knowledge of letters and sounds by writing in phonics lessons.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The majority of teaching is good or better across the school and is a key factor in the good progress made by pupils.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults work together closely to plan work that promotes early reading and numeracy skills effectively.
- Adults teach small groups well, ensuring that skills improve quickly, and they encourage children to explore their own ideas, especially when working outside. Role-play is used well to develop early speaking skills. For example, when working in the 'fire station' children explored language such as 'larger' and 'smaller'.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good across the school, but there is some variation in how well writing skills are taught. The best progress is made in Key Stage 2 because pupils are given clear guidance about how to improve and writing is made exciting. For example, Year 6 pupils speak with great enthusiasm about a recent writing project which built on their discovery of a 'crime' in the school hall. From this starting point, pupils wrote notes, reports and stories to help them solve the 'crime'.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, not all adults are confident about teaching phonics. This means that the teaching of phonics is not systematic enough and consequently writing activities do not always build well enough on pupils' different starting points.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons and this ensures that there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere as they work. Resources, including

laptops, are used well to bring subjects alive and to reinforce learning. For example, pupils learnt quickly in a numeracy lesson about addition because skills were broken into small steps on the interactive whiteboard.

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. For example in one lesson for Years 5 and 6, pupils were challenged to work out the areas of the classrooms in the school from a map. This helped them to apply their reasoning skills and there was good challenge for the most able as they were encouraged to explain the strategies they were using.
- Across the school, teachers expect pupils to think for themselves. Teachers make learning fun and encourage pupils to work without fear of failure. Consequently, pupils are aware that making mistakes is an important part of learning.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well. Their lessons are focused on the right priorities in literacy and numeracy and support learning well. Teaching assistants are skilled and play a full part in lessons often taking responsibility for the learning of groups of pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers use assessment well to establish what pupils have learnt. They set targets for pupils so that they are able to improve their work. Teachers mark books regularly, although the use of written comments to help pupils understand the next steps in their learning is stronger in English than mathematics.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils behave well in their lessons and are enthusiastic learners. They say that typical behaviour in the school is good. Good relationships are at the heart of this good behaviour and pupils are keen to do well in their work. Parents and carers, staff and governors also agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils behave sensibly when moving around school and at playtimes, although play is occasionally over boisterous at break times due to the lack of space on the playground.
- Pupils feel safe. There are very few recorded incidents of bullying. Pupils confirm this and say that bullying is rare and that on the rare occasions when it does occur it is dealt with quickly. As one pupil commented, 'If we have a problem we try to sort it out for ourselves, but if we can't an adult is always there to help us.'
- Pupils know that there are different types of bullying. For example, they talk knowledgeably about cyber-bullying and how to avoid it. Pupils enjoy school which is reflected in their attendance which is above average. A well-attended breakfast club is greatly enjoyed by pupils and has helped to improve punctuality.
- Pupils keenly take responsibility through activities such as the eco- and school councils. House captains are extremely proud of their roles and carry out their responsibilities very sensibly.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has created a strong team of teachers. They support him very well indeed and are enthusiastic in their desire to continue the rapid pace of improvement. Key development points from the last inspection have been tackled well and the school continues to move forward quickly. The local authority has supported the school well since the previous inspection. There is no complacency and staff share the headteacher's commitment to build on recent successes that have seen the school improve significantly since the previous inspection.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The headteacher is clear about the successes of the school but also knows what still needs to be improved. Development planning focuses accurately on priorities for improvement, which are shared and understood by all the staff.
- A key aspect of leadership and management that has been very effective in improving pupils' achievement has been the thorough process of developing and improving teaching. Procedures

for checking teaching and setting targets for improvement have been a key factor. Teachers know that their work is monitored closely and they feel that they are supported well by the process. Leaders have established a clear link between the performance of teachers and the awarding of pay rises. Opportunities for training are well matched to teachers' needs. For example, the school has identified as a priority the need to provide more training for staff on the teaching of phonics.

- The school has a wealth of data to check pupils' progress. These are used well by the headteacher to identify any groups who may not be doing well enough, but he takes on too much responsibility for doing this. While he has begun to share data with some staff, this is not extensive enough to enable all staff to have a full awareness of how well their pupils are progressing.
- Leaders focus sharply on ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential and have equal opportunity and that there is no discrimination. The pupil premium is used well to close the gap for eligible pupils. It has been used in a variety of ways to improve the learning of eligible pupils. For example, one-to-one tuition has had a good effect on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, and the funding of residential visits helps to improve their confidence.
- Although the teaching of phonics requires improvement, the curriculum is rich and vibrant and it supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are many opportunities for pupils to go on visits which support and enhance good learning throughout the school year.
- Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**

Governors are well trained and provide good challenge to leaders. They work well with the headteacher to ensure that the school's budget, in particular pupil premium funding, is used to good effect and there is a sharp focus on ensuring that spending is used to benefit pupils' learning. Governors regularly visit the school and this means that they are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and about the school's performance in comparison with others. They monitor performance management well and ensure that it is used to recognise and reward good teaching.

## 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>	123008
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402124

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>	299
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Duncan Sharp
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Hill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01869 252386
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