

The Lantern Community Primary

Nene Road, Ely, CB6 2WJ

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- National test results at the end of Year 6 have declined over the past three years from above average to average in English and below average in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress, overall, from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is not good enough.
- Higher-attaining pupils do not always reach the levels of which they are capable in English and mathematics in Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching approaches that lack sufficient resources do not always motivate girls to do well in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is not consistent because the outstanding practice and high expectations of what pupils should achieve seen in some classes are not yet shared effectively to impact on achievement across the school.
- Marking does not make clear to pupils in all classes the next step they must take to improve their learning. They do not have sufficient opportunity to learn from their mistakes.
- Leaders, managers and the governing body do not use statistical information on pupils' progress and achievement rigorously enough to check and to take action to improve how well pupils are learning in each year group.
- The school's plan to improve attainment in mathematics in all classes is new and has yet to be fully implemented.
- In their response to the Parent View questionnaire, one quarter of these parents do not consider their children receive appropriate homework for their age, and one fifth of these parents do not believe they receive valuable information about their children's progress.

The school has the following strengths

- None of the teaching observed was inadequate, and a small proportion in Reception, Year 1 and Year 5 was outstanding.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in most areas of learning.
- Capable teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils.
- Pupils with a disability and those who have special educational needs make good progress, especially in their emotional development.
- Some pupils who display challenging behaviour respond well to the support they are given.
- Leaders, including governors are forward thinking and have already set in motion a programme to raise achievement in the light of the 2012 national test results.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 parts of lessons and brief visits were made to a further 11 lessons. Not all teachers were seen because several, including the deputy headteacher, are in class part time. Some lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors saw pupils, some of whom are in need of additional support, working with an adult in small groups or individually away from the classroom.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons and around the school during lunchtime and breaks from lessons.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of the school, listened to some of them reading and reviewed their previous work.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion manager and staff with additional responsibilities for English, mathematics, the curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses from 134 parents who completed the questionnaire on the Parent View website, and four who spoke to an inspector when they brought their children to school.
- The school's self-evaluation, raising achievement plan, records of the school's checking on the quality of teaching and management of teachers' performance, arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety and attendance records were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Katherine Beck, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Matthew Klimcke

Additional Inspector

Debra McCarthy

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than most other primary schools.
- The Lantern Goslings Pre-school is based in the school's community room. The pre-school is subject to a separate inspection and the report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- Since 2004 when the school opened and the previous inspection in 2009, the school has grown by two classes in each year group, except Year 2 where there are three.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, additional funding is low when compared to the national average.
- Most pupils are White British. Few speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The governing body has commissioned a private company to provide before- and after-school clubs.
- The school is a National Support School. The headteacher is a National Leader of Education and the school offers professional support to a number of other schools in the area.
- Pupils are educated onsite. There is no regular alternative provision offsite.
- A new headteacher takes up her post in January 2013. There are many new governors and the Chair of the Governing Body and chairs of the committees are new to their roles.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good – or outstanding – by:
 - providing sufficiently demanding work, especially for more-able pupils to fulfil their academic potential in English and mathematics
 - giving pupils clear examples that illustrate the higher levels of work they could aspire to
 - exploring teaching approaches that motivate girls to do well in mathematics and use such methods creatively
 - making the most of the outstanding practice observed in some teaching to help less effective teachers do better
 - improving marking, by making clear to pupils the next steps in their learning and by checking that they have corrected the mistakes pointed out to them.
- Ensure that leaders, managers and members of the governing body:
 - check the quality of teaching robustly for its impact on the rate of pupils' progress and link staff promotion closely to how well pupils achieve
 - use statistical information to check that initiatives are having the desired effect on accelerating the rate at which pupils learn as they progress through the school and on their achievements when they leave
 - rigorously implement the school's strategic plan for raising achievement, and the plan for improving attainment in mathematics
 - strengthen the partnership with parents by reviewing the procedures for homework and for sharing information about pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In Year 6 in 2012, attainment was broadly average in English, but below in mathematics. Too many pupils who achieved highly in Year 2 were not successfully challenged to maintain their high levels of attainment throughout Years 3 to 6.
- The lower level of achievement in mathematics was particularly marked among the girls. Those spoken to during the inspection said that they do not like the subject very much. Information in the school shows currently that there is a balance of boys and girls in the lower attaining groups in mathematics. These pupils receive additional support.
- Numerical information shows that pupils' progress over the past two years in Years 3 and 4 has been much slower than in other classes. In part, this is because expectations of what they can achieve were not consistently high enough. Pupils now in Years 5 and 6 are making good progress, and gaps in their knowledge from the previous two years' work are closing.
- In order to improve equality of opportunity, the school has taken appropriate steps to stem the decline in achievement. Staff have undergone training in teaching mathematics. A group of very-able pupils is taught separately, but, generally, activities planned for the more able are not demanding enough.
- Pupils' attainments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have been high for several years. In 2012 they dipped to broadly average because fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 3, especially in reading and writing.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start school with knowledge, skills and understanding typical for their age. They enter Year 1 having made good levels of development. They make the best progress in their physical, personal, social and emotional development and the expressive arts. In 2012 their achievement was not as high in counting and calculation of simple addition and subtraction problems.
- Children make a secure start with reading, although their knowledge of the way sounds blend together is at an early stage of development and not yet good enough to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils read a wide range of material enthusiastically and with confidence. They make good use of their literacy skills for research for class projects and in their homework.
- The few pupils learning English as an additional language progress at a similar rate to that of others. With support in class, they gain skills in spoken English that enable them to participate fully in their work across the curriculum.
- The school applies the additional funds for those who are eligible for the pupil premium well. The effect is their enhanced rate of progress and attainment is equal to that of other pupils. They gain considerably in social skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are effectively helped to overcome barriers to their learning and they make good progress. Some are supported very effectively to overcome emotional difficulties and become ready to learn.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The match of work to pupils' different ability levels is not always precise enough. Too often, in the past, teachers pitched tasks to the ages of the pupils rather than to their varying abilities, and more-able pupils, in particular, were not given work that was demanding enough. While the school is working to improve teacher's practice in this area, pupils see few examples of work which is of the highest quality and get little guidance on what they should aspire to in order to achieve as well as they possibly can.
- There are marked disparities in the quality of teaching across the school. Some outstanding and good teaching and learning were observed. While none of the teaching observed was inadequate, planning of learning was a weakness, especially in mathematics, where only outstanding teaching inspired the girls to learn as well as the boys
- The marking of pupils' work lacks a consistently good impact on their learning. A review of pupils' past work indicated that the school's marking policy is implemented in a similar way by all staff. However, staff seldom point out precisely what the pupils need to do next to accelerate their progress. Time is not set aside to allow them to correct their errors and learning opportunities are missed.
- Parents using the online survey, Parent View, and those spoken to during the inspection, mostly agreed with the statement, 'My child is taught well.' Slightly fewer agreed strongly with the same statement.
- Pupils' homework enhances their skills in English and mathematics. It rightly mainly consists of reading, learning spellings and multiplication tables. It also gives good opportunities for research projects that they can complete over a period of time. The amount of homework is adapted appropriately to pupils' ages. Parents' hold diverse views about the homework their children receive. The school is sensibly consulting further with parents next term on this matter to strengthen its partnership with them.
- In the best lessons, teachers' high expectations of what pupils could achieve and imaginative methods to help them learn captured their interest, nourished their curiosity and built closely on previous learning. Consequently, they gained knowledge, skills and understanding rapidly and enthusiastically.
- Effective questioning is a strong feature in the best of the lessons. Questions call on pupils to think in-depth on relevant issues, to reflect on alternatives and to justify their conclusions.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to help different groups of children participate fully in lessons. Some teaching assistants are particularly well trained and skilled in working with pupils with a disability, special educational needs and behavioural issues. Their positive impact is clear in the good progress these pupils make.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most parents, staff and pupils rightly consider that behaviour is good.
- Relationships between pupils are usually happy and cooperative. They enjoy helping each other to complete their work successfully. The school's behavioural records show that there have been four fixed-term exclusions in the past year, and staff say these have led to a marked improvement in the behaviour of those concerned.

- Where learning in lessons is best, pupils apply themselves well to their work showing care and thoughtfulness. On a minority of occasions in mathematics, untidy working leads to inaccuracy in calculations.
- Most pupils are well mannered, polite and considerate to adults and to one another. Occasionally, when the work does not engage them fully, they become restless and are not as courteous as they should be.
- Pupils consider that they are safe in school. They know about the different types of bullying and what to do to keep safe, for example, on the internet.
- Leaders work closely with a range of professionals to ensure that pupils who need it receive specific support. Consequently, pupils with behavioural difficulties usually respond well and are well behaved.
- Breakfast- and after-school clubs provide good care for pupils at the beginning and end of the school day. Pupils respond well to these opportunities, and behave sensibly.
- Pupils' attendance is above average compared to other schools nationally.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has not sustained its previously high performance. Information from the checking done on the quality of teaching and data showing pupils' attainment and rates of progress have not been used rigorously enough to identify areas of strength and weakness. Consequently, efforts to secure improvement have not been directed well enough. For example, the best practice in teaching is not shared effectively enough across the staff.
- A recent action plan to raise achievement is not based securely enough on school and local authority data. In particular this plan, and those drawn up in English and mathematics, lacks sufficient clarity about the expected impact of initiatives on pupils' achievements. They do not identify precisely how improvements are to be measured.
- The school's checks on teaching and learning over time have not always pinpointed the causal link between the quality of teaching observed and the performance of the pupils. This hampers the improvement of classroom practice to bring about higher levels of achievement, and has not informed decisions on staff pay and promotion well enough.
- The leaders' vision for the school reflects its caring ethos, and its commitment to equality and diversity. The school promotes understanding of pupils' different faiths and cultures so that there is a harmonious atmosphere. Discrimination is tackled rigorously.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe are robust, especially for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. An energetic strategy to raise attendance has been very successful.
- Subject learning opportunities the pupils receive are broad ranging, but not consistently good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well provided for. Subjects provide ample opportunities for reinforcing English skills. The use of mathematical skills in a creative way across other subjects is not fully realised.
- The school has had an important role in developing links with other schools in the locality and

sharing good practice. As a result, the local authority has taken a 'light-touch' approach in questioning its performance. However, the local authority has recently challenged the school better to make improvements in the light of pupils' uneven progress, especially in Key Stage 2.

■ The governance of the school:

- Many governors are inexperienced. The Chair of the Governing Body and those of the committees are new to their roles and are undergoing training, matched to their specific needs. Their visits to gain in-depth and critical knowledge of the school, and contribution to the school's self-evaluation are at an early stage of development. They have a more positive view of the quality of teaching than is justified. The governing body is proactive in framing a strategic plan for the school's development in conjunction with the person appointed as headteacher from January 2012. Additional committees have been formed to review the direction of the school now that it has grown to its maximum size, and to implement more detailed procedures for raising pupils' achievement. Members of the governing body are involved in determining targets set for staff in order to improve teaching. These have been adapted this year to place stronger emphasis on the links between salaries and pupils' achievements. Until recently, the governing body has not used numerical data on progress from the school and local authority with sufficient rigour to challenge and hold leaders fully to account, or compare the school's performance to that of similar schools nationally. Financial resources are managed appropriately. The funds for pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium are used to good effect to support their progress in lessons, and broaden their experiences in an after-school club. Checks by the governors inform them that the funding is proving beneficial to the pupils concerned. The governors realise the importance of their role in improving the school's partnership with parents, especially with regard to homework and information about their children's progress.

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	134014
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	395647

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	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yvette Thornley
Headteacher	Janet Cobley
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
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