

# Loudwater Combined School

School Way, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1JJ

**Inspection dates** 13–14 February 2013

<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.

- The headteacher's clear focus on consistently raising pupils' achievement and aspirations is shared by staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body.
- Good leadership of teaching and learning, together with effective management of teachers' performance, has raised the quality of teaching so that it is now always good and some is outstanding.
- Consistently good teaching has led to a rising trend in attainment, with Year 6 pupils reaching standards that are significantly higher than all pupils nationally.
- All groups of pupils known to be eligible for extra funding (known as the pupil premium) make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Reception class benefit from well-planned, lively activities which ensure that they are happy and settled and make a good start to their education.
- Regular checks on learning highlight any underachievement. Good support by skilled teaching assistants closes learning gaps quickly.
- The school's caring ethos ensures that everyone is included, pupils feel safe and behaviour is consistently good.
- Members of the governing body are knowledgeable about the school and play a significant part in making important decisions which drive the school forward.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of teaching which is outstanding is not high enough to ensure all pupils learn exceptionally well.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills across other subjects.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and audiences in other subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons, taught by nine teachers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority, staff and groups of pupils.
- Joint observations of teaching and learning were conducted with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and took account of the 23 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' workbooks, and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equality, minutes of governing body meetings and planning documents.
- The inspectors took account of the 30 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Lafford

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Loudwater Combined School is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra funding (known as the pupil premium) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club for all pupils.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that:
  - outstanding practice is shared
  - all teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils
  - teachers use inspirational ways to engage pupils' interest so that pupils all learn exceptionally well.
- Enrich the ways in which subjects are planned to include more exciting, meaningful opportunities for pupils to use:
  - writing for different audiences and purposes in other subjects
  - their numeracy skills in other subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- The school's rising trend in attainment, at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6, reflects improvements that have been made in the quality of teaching. In 2012, pupils reached average standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and standards which were significantly above all pupils nationally at the end of Year 6.
- School records and information gathered when observing lessons and looking at pupils' books show that pupils' work is in line with, and often exceeds, national expectations. Consistently good teaching and some outstanding teaching, together with accurate tracking of pupil progress, ensure that all groups make at least good progress. Any signs of underachievement are quickly identified and tailor-made support helps pupils to close any gaps in their learning.
- The school was quick to recognise that reading was the weakest subject in the 2012 national tests and that boys performed less well than girls. A daily guided reading session, which followed a consistent pattern throughout the school, improved resources for boys to interest them in their reading, and a boys' and girls' library club have successfully improved achievement in reading throughout the school.
- Children enter the Reception class with typical skills for children of their age. In the busy, happy classroom and outside area, children delight in exciting activities such as trying different ways to melt various blocks of coloured ice, which intrigue and fascinate. Others choose to practise and perfect tracing over words and are proud of their skills to sound out the word they have traced. Well-planned activities such as these help children develop all areas of their learning.
- Accurate identification and an appropriate range of extra support, in the form of skilled teaching assistants, enable disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to make the same rate of progress as their peers.
- Pupils known to be eligible for extra funding benefit from a wide range of extra support, such as financial help for trips and one-to-one tuition in reading, writing and mathematics. This not only helps to narrow any attainment gap between this group of pupils and the rest but also helps many to exceed expectations and do better than all pupils nationally.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants are very enthusiastic. Their good subject knowledge is evident in the way that they question pupils to deepen their understanding and clarify any misunderstandings. They have a good relationship with their pupils. This means that pupils want to do their best, make good progress and that they achieve well over time.
- Teachers make sure that pupils know their targets and the level at which they are working. They also know what they must do to reach the next level. Pupils say that teachers' marking helps them to improve their work because they are given time to correct mistakes and learn their spellings.
- In lessons where the teaching is outstanding, every pupil is 'straining at the leash' to give the next answer or anticipate the next step in their learning. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils making either the largest or smallest number possible showed great confidence in the way they ordered the numbers that came up. They knew, for example, that when a four was produced there were only three figures smaller than that left and so they knew exactly where to place the four. Finding a letter addressed to them opened up an intriguing task to find out the meaning of certain information they had been given, and heightened their learning experience.
- Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils are secure in their learning and can talk knowledgeably about what they are doing. They are confident to apply newly acquired learning in a variety of ways, but when they enjoy the experience of inspirational teaching it brings their learning alive and creates a thirst for knowledge.
- The teaching of letters and sounds gives pupils confidence to sound out words and to recognise

a string of sounds even when they do not make a real word. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher skilfully helped a pupil to overcome a confusion between the real word 'replied' and the string of sounds which spelled out 'deplied', not a real word. Pupils in this lesson enjoyed their learning, worked well together and took great delight in perfecting their handwriting.

- Good opportunities are planned for pupils to write for different purposes and different audiences in their literacy lessons, but this is less true of other subject areas. Similarly, pupils are well used to using and applying their mathematical skills within their mathematics lessons but have fewer opportunities to put these to good use in other subjects.

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

- Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables pupils to have a clear set of personal values. Behaviour is good, it is not exemplary all of the time, but when outstanding teaching motivates and engages the whole class the behaviour is impeccable.
- Pupils work and play harmoniously. They are polite and have positive attitudes towards learning. They are confident to undertake independent learning because their teachers have given them the necessary skills and strategies that they need.
- Pupils say that bullying does not exist. They know about the different types of bullying and how to deal with it from their participation in Anti-Bullying Week.
- They are knowledgeable about how to stay safe on the internet, in school and at home. They say they feel safe in school and know that there will always be someone who will listen to them if they have any concerns. There is always a teacher available at lunchtime to listen to any concerns.
- Parents appreciate the benefits of the school's breakfast club and pupils enjoy the companionship and games. It has helped improve both attendance, which is average and also helped improve punctuality.
- Parents recognise what the school strives to achieve. Most of those who responded to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to another parent. They also said that the school dealt effectively with bullying, their children were happy, felt safe and behaved well.

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

- The headteacher and senior leaders have high aspirations and convey their expectations convincingly to all staff. As a result, there has been a consistent commitment to continuous improvement since the last inspection. The pace of this improvement has quickened as a result of the impetus given by good quality support from the local authority.
- Well-focused plans for development, based on accurate self-evaluation, have enabled the school to raise achievement across the school. Senior leaders are constantly re-evaluating all that goes on within the school and looking for ways to improve. They recognise that there is room to enrich and extend the way that subjects are planned to ensure that pupils get sufficient opportunities to use and apply their mathematics across other subjects and to use their writing skills in different ways across other subjects.
- Teaching and learning are improving strongly as a result of effective checks on teaching and learning and good quality professional development. Teachers can point to courses which have helped them improve their teaching and, as a consequence, helped raise pupils' achievement. There is a growing proportion of outstanding teaching within the school. To increase the proportion still further, this highly effective practice must be shared more regularly and extensively.
- Teachers' performance is managed effectively. Following an audit against the Teachers' Standards, school and personal targets are set and the level of support needed to reach those targets is discussed. Reviews of performance tackle weaknesses and recognise and reward

improvements in teaching.

- The school ensures equality of opportunity. All teachers are held to account and pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings. If any pupil is seen to underperform, extra help is arranged.
- Partnerships with parents are good and parents say that they find the school very approachable. This in turn helps parents to become partners in their children's learning.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body play an active part in the strategic direction of the school. They recognise the improvements that have been made since the last inspection and feel that they have been an important part of lighting the 'spark' which has triggered improvement. They have an accurate view of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and how pupils' test results compare nationally and to those of other similar schools. They have affected strategies to enable all governors to keep in touch with developments in school on a daily basis. Good-quality local authority training and their own fact-finding missions in school have helped governors to understand where weaknesses in teaching lie. They understand about the management of teachers' performance and how it must be used to improve the quality of teaching. Governors are fully involved with setting targets for the school and hold it to account. They ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources are managed well. They know that pupils known to be eligible for extra funding make good progress because they have seen the pupils' work and they check that money allocated for this purpose is used appropriately.
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## 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>	110524]
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	405291

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Randall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Cunnington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01494 524919
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