

Lyngford Park Primary School

Bircham Road, Taunton, TA2 8EX

Inspection dates

14–15 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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

- By the time they leave the school, pupils have made good progress and achieved well. This has consistently improved for the last two years.
- The quality of teaching is good, with some examples of outstanding teaching. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and a good understanding of the needs of individuals. This includes those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, and those who receive the pupil premium funds. These pupils make good progress like their friends because adults support and teach them well.
- Writing and mathematics are strengths because of the effective changes in the way pupils are taught, which ensures that pupils make good progress in lessons. This is particularly strong at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The school is improving rapidly under the effective leadership of the senior leaders. Their successful use of assessment information has contributed to the significant improvements in learning. They are not complacent and urgently want the school to be even better. The school is a happy and harmonious community. Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and work hard.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, the quality of teaching is less than good. This is because pupils are not given enough time to attempt activities on their own because teachers control the learning too much. Pupils are not asked to explain what they can do and how much they have understood.
- The teaching of early reading is not as strong as in writing and mathematics, and younger pupils' skills are not developing so rapidly.
- In Reception, there are not always enough high-quality resources and learning activities to encourage the children to develop their skills in speaking and listening as well as they could.
- Some aspects of the governing body's monitoring of the work of the school are in the early stages of development and, although there are positive signs, have not yet had full effect.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons led by 14 members of staff. They were accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteacher to eight of these lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, two representatives of the local authority, and with pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. Inspectors also took account of the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors heard pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents through informal meetings before school and from the scrutiny of the 16 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire.
- A wide range of documentation was considered, including the school’s analysis of pupils’ attainment and progress, the school’s improvement plan, school leaders’ monitoring records, pupils’ work and the records of checks made on the eligibility of staff to work with children.

Inspection team

Claire Thompson, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Jennifer Cutler	Additional inspector
David Williams	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lyngford Park is an average-sized primary school.
- The school is organised into 11 classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two single-age classes. Pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 are taught in one single-year class and in one mixed-age class in each year group. Where pupils are in mixed-year classes, they are carefully selected according to their closer range of abilities.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British families. Very few pupils are learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is above average, with the numbers of pupils who are supported through school action plus or having a statement of special educational needs being closer to average. The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is above the national average. The pupil premium is extra money given to the schools by the government to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals, are from forces families or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Pupils are educated on-site and the school does not have any additional provision. There is a private playgroup on the site which many of the children attend before starting at the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There has been a high number of new teaching staff in the school since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching already present in the school so that more pupils reach above-average levels of attainment and progress in all year groups by:
 - improving the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) so that younger pupils and pupils who finding reading more difficult can understand and apply their knowledge, and improve their progress in reading, especially in Reception and Key Stage 1.
 - ensuring a brisk pace in all lessons and providing pupils with well-matched activities so that they can make swifter progress more independently
 - improving the teaching of Reception children to promote a stronger focus on developing speaking and listening skills, by providing high-quality and suitable resources, and exciting activities, indoors and outdoors.
- Strengthening the monitoring of the governing body, building on already established good practice to further increase governors' ability to challenge and hold the school to account.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is not outstanding because the progress of pupils is not yet consistently higher than that found nationally.
- Pupils' progress in all age groups has improved in the last two years. As a result, achievement is now good and continuing to improve. In all subjects, pupils make the progress they should, and many are making better progress. This is stronger in writing and mathematics because more pupils are making faster rates of progress than ever before.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below average in 2011 and have improved in 2012 to be the highest on record, being consistently average now. Present data show that progress is continuing to accelerate because many more-able pupils are reaching higher levels than before.
- The majority of children enter the school with skills and understanding below the levels expected for their age, and in speaking and listening, this is well below. Over their year in the Reception classes, children make good progress, and their results show that they leave this stage of their education being closer to average.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are achieving well. The school's rigorous assessment procedures enable leaders to offer equal opportunities so that when pupils are not doing so well they are identified swiftly and given extra support enabling all groups to make similar rates of progress.
- Improvements in writing have been especially successful because of the school's strong focus on the good teaching of basic skills in all year groups. The use of the 'Talk For Writing' approach has played a key part in promoting pupils' confidence in using advanced writing skills and is achieving good results. An example of this in Year 2 is: 'He had eyes that glisten in the bright blue sky and hair that waves in the light evening air...'
- The consistent approach to providing 'Rotational Mathematics' has also improved average points scores in mathematics because there is a good match of learning to each pupil's needs.
- All groups of pupils achieve equally well, including those in mixed-age classes. This includes disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils of any ethnic heritage.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make good progress, and the gap in attainment between them and other pupils has narrowed in every year group. Their average points scores for all subjects are equal to those of pupils who are not entitled to this funding, and their rates of progress are also the same, and sometimes better.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good, with some that is consistently outstanding, particularly for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. This has contributed significantly to improvements in the extent to which pupils have achieved by the time they leave the school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants usually have good relationships with their pupils. They are adept at supporting individuals and groups of pupils, including those who have higher abilities or those who have special educational needs.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved, enabling pupils to have a good understanding of what they have achieved and what they should do next. This is excellent for the oldest pupils because the highly effective feedback shows pupils what they need to do to correct their errors and gives opportunities for them to practise.
- The teaching of writing is a strength of the school and pupils are knowledgeable about what makes the structure of writing so effective. This was evident in many instances in the pupils' workbooks, seen for example in a Year 6 pupil's account of 'Inching into the freezing, darkened room, Jackie's eyes flashed then adjusted. The room was full of a sea of gold and silver

snowflakes. Jackie gazed in wonder....'

- Teaching of mathematics has improved because the methods of teaching through rotating from a teaching group into independent activity challenges all pupils to have a go, to be confident and to enjoy their learning. The use of 'Successful Learning Zones' give pupils confidence to know that it is acceptable to be stuck and to persevere.
- Pupils enjoy reading because reading sessions across the school encourage pupils to read out loud to adults, to each other and by themselves. By the time pupils leave the school, they read well. Teachers demonstrate good reading practice in story-time sessions.
- The teaching of reading is not as effective as the teaching of writing because the programme used to teach younger pupils about phonics is not sufficiently engaging. During these lessons, pupils do not always achieve well enough.
- The long history of low expectations of pupils has been eliminated now. Sometimes adults dominate learning too much so that some pupils rely too heavily on adult support and direction. Opportunities to be independent and quickly apply their skills can be limited. Teachers do not question pupils frequently enough so that pupils have chance to explain what they have understood.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is weaker when the children are not sufficiently involved in choosing and making decisions about their learning. In these lessons, the learning lacks high quality, and does not have the thoughtful resources that would encourage the children to speak, to be excited, and to learn inside and outside.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' good behaviour continues to be a positive feature of the school. They behave well in their classes and around the school. This was especially demonstrated on the final day of inspection when pupils managed themselves in very controlled ways when raising funds for 'Red Nose' day.
- Pupils enjoy their activities, work diligently and want to achieve. They show good levels of concentration in lessons and work cooperatively, supporting each other well. This aspect of their behaviour was exemplary in the best lessons seen during the inspection. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because there are occasions when pupils rely too heavily on adults for direction instead of applying themselves confidently.
- Pupils say they feel very safe at school and that incidents of bullying are rare. They feel extremely confident that adults listen to them and deal well with bullying if it should happen. Pupils are very aware of the different types of bullying.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and can identify any possible hazards. They understand well the dangers of the internet and know how to stay safe when using different sites.
- The school has a harmonious atmosphere because the overwhelming majority of pupils are polite, courteous and enjoy the company of the adults. They behave sensibly around the school and on the playground.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision of how the school can continue to improve and they share this very effectively with all staff and governors. Parents and carers have confidence in the leadership of the school, and all who responded to Parent View indicated they would recommend the school to others. The staff also strongly support the leaders' ambitions.
- Leaders' accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness stems from the regular review of pupils' attainment and progress. Systems for assessing pupils' progress are used widely to inform improvement planning which correctly identifies the most urgent priorities.

- The headteacher has a very accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. High expectations are set when giving teachers feedback and there is good professional support for all staff, linked to performance management to help them improve their practice. Currently, this lacks frequent enough links to the standards pupils reach in each class.
- The school is well supported through the growing partnership of four local schools which focuses on school development. This is contributing well to staff confidence, and is offering effective ways of supporting improvements to outstanding teaching and learning through sharing excellent practice.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school through coaching provided by a local Leader of Education from an outstanding primary school.
- The curriculum has rightly focused on developing pupils' basic skills. It makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by funding activities and trips in the locality, as well as inviting visitors to school and providing opportunities for extending pupils' sporting, artistic and cultural interests.
- Currently, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader is not given enough opportunities to use her expert knowledge to insist upon the Reception children having the highest quality and most relevant education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body take their responsibilities seriously, regularly visiting the school to see for themselves how pupils are being taught, and focusing on developing their skills to challenge leaders about the quality of pupils' learning and their results. They are taking part in a comprehensive training programme and are currently recruiting more skilled members. Governors welcome the wide range of information they receive about teaching, and have a broad understanding of the school's performance and what is needed to continue on the journey of improvement to outstanding. They know that the progress of all pupils has improved over the last two years and now compares similarly to all other pupils nationally. They are aware of how pupil premium funding has been spent, and know that these pupils perform similarly to other pupils in the school. Governors have checked on the way that leaders meet their performance management objectives and have linked their decisions to leadership pay rises. The school is solvent and the school budget is managed appropriately. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements. Although governors have become more active in monitoring the work of the school, they have only recently begun to monitor the work of leaders more robustly. This process is still in the early stages of development and has yet to have full effect, but there are indications that the increased level of challenge is improving the way the school is held to account.

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	123715
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	406185

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	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Dingle
Headteacher	Annette Cox
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 March 2011
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