

Layton Primary School

Meyler Avenue, Layton, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY3 7DX

Inspection dates 23–24 April 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.

- Pupils achieve well, attainment is above average by the time pupils leave and rising.
- Improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage have led to children now making good progress and achieving well.
- Teaching is good. Lessons capture pupils' interests and enthusiasm and basic skills are taught well.
- Pupil's behaviour is good overall. They say they enjoy school and feel safe.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and management. With the very good support of senior leaders and the governing body this has brought about good progress since the previous inspection.
- The school is well placed to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to see that pupils make even better progress.
- Teachers' marking does not always ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils are not guided sufficiently to present their work neatly and accurately.
- In a few lessons, questioning is not used well and progress slows because pupils spend too long listening to the teacher.
- The range of playground activities available to pupils during play-times and lunchtimes are not well organised and are uninviting.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 lessons of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Additional short visits in lessons were carried out to look at important issues such as how well pupils get on with their classmates and how well they behave.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random, members of the governing body and with senior staff. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy.
- Pupils' current work and assessment from the previous academic year were scrutinised, including information which showed how well pupils do in English and mathematics.
- Fifteen responses were received to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors spoke to parents and scrutinised the school's own parent questionnaire survey.
- Inspectors reviewed the staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors investigated a parental complaint.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Terry Bond

Additional Inspector

Emma Jackson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is far larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils whose parents are members of the armed forces and those looked after by the local authority) is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved many awards including Healthy School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of consistently good and better teaching by:
 - ensuring that questioning is used well in allowing pupils to demonstrate what they know, what they understand and what they can do in order to help those who need further guidance and challenge those who are ready to move on
 - making sure marking in all classes is used well in showing pupils how they might improve their own work with teachers checking that pupils take full notice of the comments made
 - making sure there is not too much talk from the teacher that limits the time available for pupils to carry out work independently
 - ensuring pupils present their work neatly and accurately.
- Ensure that in the outside area at play-times and lunchtimes there are activities for pupils to engage in that are stimulating and inviting so that they enjoy these sessions as much as they say they enjoy their lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Evidence from a wide range of data, including lesson observations and the work in pupils' books shows that progress is good across the school. This includes that of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs; more-able pupils, and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- The good deployment of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning is a key factor in the good progress made.
- Children join the school with skills below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in the Reception classes because of expert teaching and a good balance of teacher-led work and opportunities for choice. For example, a topic about Jack and the Beanstalk really engages children's learning. They use their writing skills well in producing 'Wanted' posters for the giant. Children develop their skills well outdoors because staff provide well-planned activities.
- Results from national tests in Year 1 to check pupils' knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) are above the national average due to good teaching.
- Attainment in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2 historically has been below average. Improvements in teaching have ensured that attainment in both subjects is now in line with national averages. Inspection evidence shows this is an improving picture and reflects good progress in both subjects.
- The school's focus on improving writing, especially in Key Stage 1, is proving to be successful with attainment at least in line with the national average in Year 2 at the expected level with evidence of good progress. However, some of the work across the school is not presented either neatly or accurately.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average at the end of Year 6 at the expected levels. Inspection evidence demonstrates that improvements in teaching have brought about an increasing number of pupils now achieving at the higher levels in mathematics and English.
- Pupils supported through pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress in English and mathematics and exceed the national average for this group. The school has been successful in ensuring there are no gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school in reading and writing and a narrowing gap of a term in mathematics.
- Parents who completed the questionnaire are pleased with the progress their children make.

The quality of teaching

is good

- High expectations and challenge are apparent in teaching in all year groups, especially in Years 2 and 6. Teaching overall is good across the school and some is outstanding. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, English and mathematics and other subjects across the rest of the school are taught effectively and, as a result, pupils do well.
- In the Reception classes, good teaching provides an extensive range of challenging learning opportunities to engage children. They join in enthusiastically with imaginative activities that support children's early reading, writing and mathematical development as well as their social development. Staff recognise that more could be done to involve children in using information and communication technology.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching is increasingly effective in encouraging pupils to be more independent in their learning. For example, a trawl of the school grounds by Year 4 pupils looking for different habitats for insects stimulated good discussion among pupils about what they had discovered. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson all pupils were actively engaged in independent problem-solving activities, discussing and supporting each other very well.

- In some lessons teachers talk for too long a time and as result the time left for pupils to carry out independent work is reduced greatly resulting in work not being completed.
- Teachers carefully select questions and where teaching is at least good, they use questioning skilfully. However, where teaching is less successful questioning is not used well.
- Marking is inconsistent. Sometimes, where pertinent comments are provided, teachers do not make sure that pupils take into account what has been suggested in their future work.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from the good quality help provided by teaching assistants who are effectively deployed both within and outside the classroom.
- Reading is well taught throughout the school including the teaching of early reading skills. Pupils say they enjoy reading and are keen to talk about what they like to read.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, work centred on a study of Kenya broadens pupils' understanding of cultural diversity.
- Parents who completed the questionnaires believe the quality of teaching is good, as do the pupils who spoke with inspectors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say they enjoy school with one pupil stating, 'we are one big happy family.'
- The school employs a good range of strategies to support pupils whose social and interpersonal skills present challenging behaviour.
- Pupils want to achieve well. Older pupils respond well to the opportunities provided for them to take on school responsibilities. These include being a member of the school council and representing the school at conferences away from school.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good overall.
- While the school has an extensive outside area, there is little for pupils to do at play-times and lunchtimes and this sometimes results in boisterous behaviour. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with effectively. The inspectors investigated a parental concern with regard to this issue.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and are willing to share their experiences about school. For example, they say they enjoy learning to play brass instruments and attending the breakfast club.
- Parents who completed the school's own questionnaire and those who completed the on-line questionnaire were mostly confident that the school provides a safe environment and that pupils enjoy school and behave well. A scrutiny of records and observations during the inspection confirms their views are correct and demonstrates that behaviour over time is good overall.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They recognise dangers when using the internet and know how to avoid these problems. One child commented, 'Some things on the internet are not for us to look at.' Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. Pupils are confident that should any ever occur, adults would deal with it firmly.
- Attendance has improved and is now average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of what the school is doing well and how it needs to improve. As such, the school's own self-evaluation is accurate.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the leadership team, has driven improvement with considerable success. Notable strengths include increasing the amount of good teaching and eradicating inadequate teaching, working with governors to improve their effectiveness and introducing changes to the curriculum. These features together with pupils' good achievement highlight the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

- The increasingly effective leadership team is well focused on ensuring that pupils' achievements are the best they can be.
- Child protection and safeguarding have a high priority. Leaders ensure that all requirements are met and that the building is a safe environment.
- Close checking on teaching performance has raised the quality of teaching with only a few variations between classes. Teachers are set targets to improve their work and meetings are held to check on pupils' progress in their classes. As a result, both teaching and pupils' progress are good.
- The school has a clear and effective system to track pupils' progress. As a result, the school is able to identify quickly where progress is less than good and put in place systems to accelerate learning.
- The reorganised curriculum has had a strong focus that is increasingly successful on developing basic skills, but not to the detriment of subjects such as music and physical education. Pupils say how much they enjoy lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is promoted effectively across the curriculum.
- School leaders promote equal opportunities and cooperation strongly. This results in no discrimination.
- The use of pupil premium funding is monitored robustly by leaders and the governing body. Funding is successfully targeted at raising achievement, meeting pupils' social and emotional needs and the provision of wider learning opportunities.
- The local authority has been supportive and effective in assisting the school's good improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body, led by an experienced Chair, have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and improvement priorities. They are proud of what has already been achieved in the newly extended school building, but are always ready to challenge leaders especially about pupils' achievements. A well-organised committee structure ensures that governors have a good understanding of all aspects of the school. As such, they have a good understanding of the school's performance data and are rightly proud of the improvements made since the previous inspection. Governors keep a close check on the school's budget, making sure that, for example, pupil premium money is used to good effect and for the purpose intended. Governors have a good understanding of how performance management is carried out and how good teaching is linked to pay awards and of how teaching that is less successful has been addressed. Governors make sure that school policies are regularly reviewed and that safeguarding arrangements meet regulatory requirements.

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	119246
Local authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	405845

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	587
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Fisher
Headteacher	Jonathan Clucas
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2011
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