

# Leesland Church of England Controlled Infant School

Whitworth Road, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 3NL

**Inspection dates** 20–21 March 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching over time have not been good enough.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are significantly lower than those nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Few pupils in recent years have reached the higher levels of which some were capable.
- Pupils' progress is uneven across the school because the quality of teaching varies. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do and this hinders the progress pupils make.
- In some classes pupils are not clear how they can improve their work because the feedback they receive is not clear enough. They do not always use what they have previously learnt to help them avoid repeating mistakes and build steadily on their learning.
- A legacy of weak teaching has left some pupils with gaps in their learning. Not all staff are skilled in using information about what pupils know and where gaps lie when planning work and questioning pupils. This slows the rates of progress for some.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy school and attend school regularly. Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around school, try hard and take a pride in their work.
- Learning in many classes is rapidly improving. Children achieve well in the Reception classes because staff are good at knowing what children can do and what they need to learn next.
- Senior leaders have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They acted swiftly to eradicate underachievement and to bring about improvements to the quality of teaching.
- The governors share leaders' focused commitment to raising standards. They have a good grasp on how the school is doing and where it needs to improve further.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection of the infant school took place at the same time as that of the federated junior school. Some meetings were held with inspectors from both teams.
- The inspection team observed learning in 12 lessons and part lessons. Most were observed jointly with the associate headteacher or assistant headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and discussed the school's evaluation of the quality of teaching.
- They listened to pupils read as well as observing reading being taught in lessons across the school. Inspectors chatted to pupils informally throughout the inspection. Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons and at various times around the school, including lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered parents' views of the school through informal discussions over the two days of the inspection, the 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as seven paper responses and correspondence from one parent. The views of 43 staff who completed the staff questionnaire were also taken into account and the team also talked to teaching and non-teaching staff during the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, associate and assistant headteachers and middle leaders, to discuss the progress that groups of pupils make throughout the school. They analysed the school's information on attainment and progress. An inspector also met with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors looked at documentation such as policies, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and the school's improvement planning. They looked at attendance figures and at the school's website.
- The team examined records of the local authority's involvement with the school and met with two local authority representatives.

## Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Lewis

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is larger than the average sized infant school. The school has grown in size since the last inspection. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in three Reception classes and there are three classes in Year 1. Currently, Year 2 pupils are taught in two classes; this will increase to three in September.
- The school is part of the Leesland Federation with Leesland Church of England Controlled Junior School. The senior leadership team and a number of middle leaders perform their role across the two schools.
- The executive headteacher of the federation took up post in 2011 and took over the role of headteacher for the infant school in 2012 as the previous headteacher left. The associate headteacher was appointed in September 2013. Almost half the teachers are new to their posts over the last 18 months.
- The school is supported by a Local Leader in Education who is headteacher of a federation of schools in Hampshire.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from service families) is average.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is constantly good or better, in order to secure consistently good progress for pupils, by making sure that:
  - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - teachers make better use of information on what pupils can and cannot do when planning work, so that pupils' knowledge is secure and they are challenged to achieve their best
  - teachers' marking and feedback are always of high quality and give pupils clear guidance on what to do next, encouraging them to use what they have already learnt and so avoid repeating mistakes.
- Improve standards across the school in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - deepening pupils' understanding of books whenever they are reading, especially when the whole class has timetabled reading activities
  - ensuring pupils are encouraged to write and to practise their writing skills, including spelling, grammar and punctuation, in all subjects
  - building on the good work already started to encourage pupils to try out and talk about their ideas in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because in recent years all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, have not made enough progress from their starting points to achieve well. As a consequence standards have fallen for the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The leadership team has taken decisive action to address weaknesses in the quality of teaching and so progress for all groups is now improving. Leaders have improved systems to record and check pupils' progress and this has enabled them to target support where it is most needed.
- The school's current information on the levels pupils are working at, together with the work in pupils' books, shows progress is accelerating for all pupils and achievement has improved since the start of the year.
- Few pupils have reached the higher levels of which they are capable because teachers' expectations have not been high enough and chances to challenge the more able pupils to fulfil their potential have been missed. Teachers' increasing understanding of pupils' levels and targets through better use of pupil progress information is beginning to ensure that an increasing proportion of the more able pupils are now working at these higher levels.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start school with skills that are generally well below those expected for their age in all areas of learning, particularly in language and communication. They make good progress and by the time they start in Year 1 many reach the levels expected for their age. This is because staff are skilled at checking children's progress in order to provide learning experiences that develop their skills.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding were about six months behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in the national tests in 2013. The most recent performance information shows that they are now achieving as well as their peers. This is because leaders and staff are using the information more effectively to check these pupils do not fall behind and to improve the quality of support they receive.
- Training for staff to help improve pupils' understanding of phonics (the sounds letters make) secured a slight increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the phonics reading check in 2013 compared to the previous year. With greater consistency in the quality of phonics teaching, pupils are more confidently using these skills to help them tackle unknown words as they read and progress is accelerating.
- Although pupils' standards in writing in 2013 were low, current work in their books shows that they are now making at least expected progress. However, not all make good progress across the school yet. This is because in some classes they do not regularly have the chance to practise and reinforce their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is improving. This is in part because the school has begun to encourage pupils to have time to talk about their ideas and try them out on 'thinking paper' in order to develop their mathematical skills. However, this approach is not yet used consistently well in all classes and it is too soon to see the impact of this initiative on pupils' standards.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teaching over time has not resulted in good achievement for all groups of pupils. Senior leaders have tackled inadequate teaching successfully and pupils are now making better progress. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school remain.
- As a result of better use of pupil progress information, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are now more accurate. Teachers occasionally pitch work at a level that is too easy for pupils, or move on to harder work without checking that there are no gaps in pupils' understanding. Pupils' progress is most rapid where teachers check regularly how well pupils are doing and

promptly adapt activities to increase the challenge or provide support where needed.

- Teachers use a range of ways to teach reading, including reading aloud with adults, individually and in groups. Leaders have provided additional training to improve the skills of teachers and additional adults and they use this effectively to question and probe pupils' understanding of the texts. However, the tasks set for some pupils do not help them to develop a deep understanding of the books they are reading, especially when all are reading in class.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are provided with additional help in class and also in small groups and one-to-one sessions. They are given specific support to help them to overcome their difficulties and they are catching up with their classmates.
- Pupils respond well to teachers' marking and to the verbal feedback provided by teachers and other adults. A big push by leaders to improve the quality of this feedback has resulted in a more effective whole-school approach to marking. Pupils know that work marked in pink means 'think' and in green its 'great'. However, the best quality marking seen in some classes is not yet consistent across the school. For example, at times this advice does not extend pupils' learning and there are too few chances for pupils to respond to teachers' marking by correcting and improving their own work. Consequently, they continue to make the same mistakes.

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

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Most parents agree that pupils behave well in school. They are polite and friendly towards each other and to adults. They take a pride in their work and the school surroundings and typically respond well to instructions.
- From the first day they join, pupils are encouraged to use the school's values, which include ideas such as independence, developing creativity and working as a team. Displays in classrooms and the hall depict different creatures linked to each value. Pupils are keen to tell visitors what each means and that they receive a certificate if they demonstrate one of the values. For example, when a pupil said they had received a 'penguin certificate' for their work that day another explained that 'the penguin is resilience – that means not giving up'.
- Pupils typically get on well together. They are helpful towards one another in lessons and listen respectfully while others share their views. Low-level disruption in lessons is unusual.
- Steps to improve the quality of teaching have in turn led to improvements in pupils' attitudes. On rare occasions pupils' attention dips when unsure of their task and they become fidgety.
- Leaders recently provided training which ensured staff are becoming increasingly successful in supporting a very small number of pupils with particular behavioural needs in classes. This reflects the school's focus on ensuring everyone has the same chances and helps to foster good relationships.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is safe and care is taken to ensure, for example, that staff and pupils are secure, regardless of the split nature of the site.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and move about the two-storey building with care. They understand different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They say that bullying does not happen often and that adults are on hand to sort out any disagreements that occasionally arise. Most parents and staff agree.
- Attendance is rising and is currently above average. Parents are encouraged to ensure their children attend regularly through regular reminders in the school newsletter and on the website.

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

- The senior leadership team has worked successfully to bring about rapid improvements. Leaders are highly regarded by the local authority and supported effectively by governors. Together, they review all aspects of the school's work thoroughly and understand both the strengths and what needs to be improved.
- Leaders are aware that the trend in attainment by the end of Year 2 has been too low given the

starting points of the pupils. The executive headteacher, very ably supported by the associate and assistant headteachers, has successfully tackled inadequacies in teaching and learning. As a result, pupils across the school are now making at least expected progress and many, especially in the Reception classes, achieve well.

- Leaders have created a school where a very large majority of staff, governors and parents work together with a commitment to continuous improvement. A very small minority of staff and parents voiced concerns over recent changes. Evidence from pupils' work, progress information and checks by the local authority support the positive impact leaders are having on raising pupils' achievement.
- Leaders visit classrooms and check pupils' work to see how well teachers are doing and set targets for improvement. They know that remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching must be addressed in order to raise achievement further and become a 'good' school. Teachers know that their progression on the pay scale is linked to their performance in the classroom and that only the best teaching is rewarded. They are provided with both individual support as well as training for all staff in key areas such as the teaching of reading.
- The executive headteacher, supported by her able leadership team, has been effective in making Leesland Infant School and its partner school, Leesland Junior School, work together well. Subject leaders are deployed well across both schools in the Leesland Federation in a way that promotes high expectations across both schools and makes the best use of staff expertise. As a result, pupils in both schools benefit from much better continuity than in previous years and receive an education of higher quality.
- The local authority has provided considerable help to leaders as they worked to bring about the necessary improvements in the school's effectiveness, for example carrying out joint lesson observations with leaders and providing training for staff and governors. Working on behalf of the local authority, a headteacher of another Hampshire federation of schools has provided effective assistance to senior leaders, verifying their judgements and supporting their actions.
- Pupils learn a wide range of subjects. They enjoy the various extra activities such as visits to local parks or the fun sport day in aid of the charity Sport Relief that was held during the inspection. These effectively promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Provision for sports has been strengthened through the additional primary sports funding, for example building children's core balance skills through the purchase of balance bikes. Work with the Gosport Sports Partnership and dance workshops across the federation have broadened pupils' experience of a range of sports. These links are planned to continue to provide training for staff and improve their skills.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing and its priorities for improvement and work closely with the senior leadership team and the local authority to achieve these. They know how well the school is doing in relation to other schools nationally through their experience across the federation as well as seeking training to have a more effective working knowledge of the information about pupils' progress. This enables them to challenge as well as support school leaders and hold them to account for pupils' achievement. Governors are increasingly linking their visits with the priorities highlighted in the school improvement plan. They have a very good grasp of how the performance of staff is managed and encourage staff training. Pay is linked to performance. They understand how leaders tackle underperformance. Governors ensure that finance is carefully allocated and checked including funding such as the pupil premium. They have good procedures in place to make sure safeguarding arrangements meet statutory 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116335
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	443550

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	238
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Elizabeth Swann
<b>Headteacher</b>	Executive Headteacher: Sue Hine Associate Headteacher: Ros Wigley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 583872
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