

# Loddon Primary School

Silverdale Road, Earley, Reading, RG6 7LR

## Inspection dates

21–22 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>
	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.

- This is a school where pupils make good progress at all key stages. As a result, standards are above average in all subjects by the time pupils leave Year 6.
- Gaps between different groups of pupils have been mostly closed because of good teaching and the use of various support strategies.
- Teaching is now good and use of adult support is a strength. As a result, pupils are making faster progress especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy school and quickly make friends.
- Pupils make a positive contribution to the life of the school; for example, as go-betweens to help to resolve any problems among each other.
- The governing body and the recently appointed headteacher have clear understanding of the school's priorities and are driving forward further school improvements.
- Since the previous inspection, teaching has improved and achievement is good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding to ensure that pupils make consistently outstanding progress across the school.
- Some senior and middle leaders do not check that teachers' planning meets the needs of each pupil, especially in writing at Key Stage 2. Furthermore, there are few occasions provided to teachers to see outstanding practices.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of shorter visits to other lessons. They listened to pupils reading from Year 2 and Year 6, attended assemblies and scrutinised their work.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, senior and middle leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at the documents relating to safeguarding, the performance management of staff, the tracking and assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, records on behaviour and safety, attendance data and the school's records on the monitoring of teaching and learning. They looked at the school's spending relating to the pupil premium.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 39 parents and carers in the on-line Parent View survey. The views of parents and carers were sought at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors scrutinised 38 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Zahid Aziz, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Shela Rowan	Additional Inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Loddon Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding (additional funding provided by the government) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- Breakfast and after-school provision is managed by a private company and is subject to a separate inspection.
- More pupils than average join or leave the school at different points in the school year.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2012.
- Awards held by the school include Healthy Schools, International School and Eco School Silver award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- No pupils receive any alternative provision.

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

- Strengthen the quality of teaching and learning, especially at Key Stage 2, by making sure that pupils :
  - take more responsibility for their own learning
  - are always clear about their learning targets and how to achieve them
  - are accurate in their use of spelling and grammar and that they present their work to a high standard as a result of high expectations from teachers.
- Ensure that the school's senior and middle leaders have a greater impact on improving pupils' progress by:
  - setting teachers targets that focus on pupils' previous learning and ensuring that teachers produce and deliver lesson plans that meet the needs of all pupils, especially in writing at Key Stage 2
  - providing continuous training and support to staff, including opportunities to observe excellent practice both within and outside of the school, to help improve teaching to an outstanding level.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 make good progress across all areas of learning, from expected starting points. By the time that children start in Year 1, standards are above expectations. This good start is systematically built on and good progress is a consistent feature across the school. However, in Key Stage 2, pupils are not always given tasks that promote their independent learning skills and at times this prevents progress from being even faster.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils have many opportunities to improve their speaking, reading and writing skills. Pupils in Year 1 develop and improve speaking skills by using imaginative words, for example to describe a story about a prince who 'bumped' into people and animals. In Year 2, for instance, pupils mark their own writing and improve their speaking skills through 'talk partners'. As a result, they improve their speaking, listening and communication skills very well.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils' progress and attainment continue to improve well. In 2011, when there was a dip in the Year 6 test results and boys were doing less well, action was swiftly taken and the issue was resolved by better support and use of different learning methods. As a result, in 2012 pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 made good progress in English and mathematics compared to that found nationally and gaps between different groups have been almost eliminated, including those for boys.
- Pupils' work from last year, current work and lesson observations show that pupils in all years make good progress. Achievement at times lags a little behind in writing at Key Stage 2 because expectations of how much attention pupils pay to grammar, spelling and presentation are not consistently at a high enough level.
- Most pupils have a positive attitude to reading books. They use a range of techniques well to sound out words they find difficult to read, such as pictures and sight of words. As a result, they make good progress.
- Pupils' knowledge in checking their own progress as successful learners is developed well at Key Stage 2. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson, pupils wrote about 'legends' and marked their own work against the expected standard. This helped them to understand the variety and key description of the topic. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, higher ability pupils were engrossed in solving their own problems. As a result, pupils gained new knowledge and enhanced other skills, such as working independently, which prepare them well for the future.
- The high number of pupils leaving and joining the school at Key Stage 2 has an impact on the published test results at the end of Year 6 but these pupils make good progress from their differing starting points. Those who remain in the school through Nursery to Year 6 achieve particularly well. Those who need support for English as an additional language are checked quickly and they receive appropriate guidance so that they settle fast and learn well.
- The needs of pupils supported by additional funding through the pupil premium, those who are disabled and those with special educational needs are accurately identified. As a result, these pupils make progress at least similar to, and at times better than, other groups of pupils in school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection to the good level now evident. This, together with the highly effective deployment of support staff for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils supported through pupil premium funding, contributes much to the good achievement of pupils across the school. There are, however, some inconsistencies in teaching that prevent it from being outstanding. One of these inconsistencies is that pupils' learning targets are not always made clear to them or how to achieve them.

- Strong relationships exist between adults and pupils. Pupils respond very well to the good support and guidance they receive. One pupil said, 'Adults are kind and fun to be in school'.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers make learning enjoyable. Adults develop children's language through their own example and provide a whole range of activities so that children are fully involved in their learning. In one session, all staff made notes of individual children's achievement. This ensures that tasks are planned and well matched with the needs of those children.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and share the lesson's objectives and how to be successful learners with pupils. They use a range of methods to improve pupils' English and mathematical skills. In Year 6, for instance, a separate whiteboard display is used to focus on tasks, learning objectives, outcome and important words for each subject. This helps to re-enforce new learning throughout the day. As a result, these pupils make faster progress with a clearer understanding of ideas.
- Checking and marking are regular and pupils check their own work, particularly in Key Stage 1. However, the checking of pupils' progress at Key Stage 2, mainly in writing, is more inconsistent. This is particularly the case in the accuracy of spelling and grammar and furthermore, work is not always well presented due to lack of high expectations from teachers.
- Reading is taught well. Strengths in the teaching of the letters and sounds help pupils make good progress in their early reading skills. The school has a good range of resources, including new books to help pupils learn their letters and sounds, and use them to improve their reading.
- Parents and carers receive extensive support so that they can help their children's learning at home. The examples include: 'Curriculum Evening', with a focus on certain topics, 'Learning Platform Workshop', 'Families into School Fortnight', and inviting parents and carers to attend lessons with their children. Pupils' homework includes tasks such as topic research which help to improve independent learning skills, although there are some parents and carers who would like to see more focus on spelling.

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

- Pupils feel safe and happy being in the school. One pupil remarked, 'I am never lonely because I have so many friends.' This is reflected well in the above average attendance of the pupils. Pupils say the behaviour has improved since the arrival of the new headteacher and it is good.
- There are various reward systems in place to encourage learning and improve behaviour. The new house points system has been very popular with pupils. Pupils are very competitive to raise their house points and, as a result, they have a better focus on their learning and behaviour.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying and are confident that any incidents would be dealt with swiftly and sensitively. They know how to keep themselves safe in and out of the school, for example road safety and cyber-bullying. Pupils have a clear understanding of safe use of the internet.
- The school council is well organised and has a budget and a treasurer. The money is used to buy toys for 'Golden Time' and this helps pupils' understanding of how to manage income and spending. The 'Buddy Bench' is another example where pupils take on a responsible role to support pupils who might need help during playtime.
- Pupils feel that the school listens to their ideas and suggestions. In the recent appointment of the headteacher, the school council was involved as part of a committee that recommended the selection of the candidates for the headteacher's post.
- The parents' and carers' comments and questionnaire responses show they have confidence in the education and care and safety the school provides, especially since the arrival of the new headteacher.

**The leadership and management are good**

- As a result of concerted effort from the governing body and the senior leaders, the achievement and teaching have improved to good since the last inspection.
- The recently appointed headteacher has high expectations of all the staff and pupils. She leads by example in setting out her ambitions for the school. Within a very short period, she has managed to get an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The impact of the new headteacher is seen, for example, in the results of the staff questionnaire which are positive and show that morale is high. Pupils feel that behaviour has improved since applying the new house points system. Parents and carers commented on the positive improvement seen in the school, such as the visibility of the headteacher around the school.
- The headteacher, with other senior leaders, checks the quality of teaching in detail. They give a clear feedback on how to improve and give support through team teaching. As a result, over time, teaching has improved to good. However, there are not enough opportunities for teachers to develop their professional development by observing excellent teaching practices both within the school and beyond which would add further to improving teaching and achievement.
- Teachers use the 'Teacher Standards' to plan their teaching and this is adding to the quality of learning provided for pupils. Pay increases are very much linked to teachers' performance in the classroom and staff are rewarded when targets are met. However, some senior leaders and middle leaders do not always check the targets for teachers based on pupils' previous learning in order to make sure that their planning and lesson delivery meets the needs of all pupils, especially in writing at Key Stage 2.
- Leaders have worked well to improve achievement in mathematics since the last inspection, especially by expecting higher ability pupils to work independently. As a result, more pupils have achieved Level 6 than previously. Progress in reading has improved because of improved teaching and because of new high quality reading materials that give pupils a love of reading.
- The various subjects taught at the school, together with a wide range of educational visits and after-school activities, help provide a vibrant learning journey for pupils.
- As a result of strengths in supporting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, pupils understand right from wrong, they learn and get on well with each other regardless of their backgrounds. The school promotes well 'A Sense of Place Week', a global citizenship awareness theme and, as a result, it creates a better understanding of multicultural Britain.
- The local authority's support for the school over recent years has been appropriate. At present, the school receives 'tailor-made' support which links closely to the school showing that it has a good capacity for sustained improvement, largely through its own resources. The school promotes equal opportunities for various groups and tackles discrimination well. As a result, all groups make good progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is strong and transparent in the work it does. It has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how well different groups of pupils achieve. It has a wide range of professional and community expertise that contributes effectively to most aspects of its management of the school. Governors regularly attend training events to improve their knowledge and expertise. The governing body is aware of the good teaching in school and how this is rewarded. Regular checks by the governing body ensure that health and safety requirements are met and that other safeguarding procedures meet the current requirements. Under the leadership of a strong Chair, the governing body works well to improve the ways in which it evaluates the work of the school and engages with parents and carers. For example, before the headteacher was appointed, parents and carers were fully consulted in regards to the qualities they would like to see in the new headteacher. The governing body knows how well pupil premium funding is spent and its impact, such as better links with hard-to-reach families through the appointment of a parent support advisor. This is

helping to improve attendance, achievement and behaviour for all groups.

## 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>	131192
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	406419
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	456
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Newton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Phillips
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29–30 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 926 1449
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