

Lyncrest Primary School

Lyncrest Avenue, Northampton, NN5 5PE

Inspection dates 3–4 October 2012

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| 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 | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and governors have developed an impressive team of senior leaders who check the work of the school very thoroughly.
- As a result, achievement, attendance and teaching are good and continuing to improve.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of good teaching and the high quality of care.
- Pupils enjoy a wide variety of exciting visits, residential stays and visitors to school throughout the year.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is clearly reflected in their good levels of attendance.
- Outstanding behaviour is a significant factor in the good and sometimes better progress that pupils make in most lessons.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and courteous.
- All pupils are known as individuals and the school celebrates their cultural diversity.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to complete their work.
- They feel safe and well cared for, get along with one another very well and have a strong sense of community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in Key Stage 1 is not quite as rapid as in Key Stage 2.
- In a few lessons, particularly at Key Stage 1, activities are not matched closely to pupils' needs and the pace of learning slows.
- Sometimes pupils do not know precisely what their individual targets for improvement are.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons involving eight teachers.
- They held discussions with school leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority, and met with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and reviewed documentation, including improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils’ progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and samples of pupils’ work. They heard groups of pupils read and spoke with others about behaviour and safety arrangements at the school.
- They took account of the 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, and considered the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspection team

Michael Bartleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lyncrest Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of those learning English as an additional language are average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave partway through their primary school education is higher than in most schools.
- A before-school breakfast club and an after-school club managed by the governing body run daily.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - activities in lessons always precisely match pupils' next steps in learning
 - more-able pupils are provided with more challenging work in Key Stage 1
 - learning moves at a consistently rapid pace in all lessons
 - pupils know their targets and are always shown precisely how they can improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start at the school, their skills and understanding are below the levels expected for their age. Good induction processes, including well-managed home visits, ensure that children settle into school quickly. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes across all areas of learning.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily and is now above average, particularly in reading. The school's emphasis on basic skills ensures that all pupils have a good foundation from which to develop further.
- Excellent strategies to track and review pupils' performance mean that good progress is maintained throughout Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Where pupils are in danger of falling back, effective individual support is provided to boost their achievement.
- Progress across Key Stage 1 has been more variable over time, with few pupils attaining the higher National Curriculum Level 3 in English and mathematics. In the few lessons where teaching is not up to the usual high standard, more-able pupils are not fully challenged and their progress slows. However, this has started to rise as teaching improves.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium are well supported by knowledgeable, well-trained staff and make similar good progress to their peers. The support is effectively planned by the special educational needs coordinator and well matched to pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils at the early stages of learning English and those who arrive during the course of the school year also make good progress because their needs are quickly assessed and effective support is set up to support their learning.
- Reading is promoted successfully across the school. The guided reading sessions are very well structured and ensure that there is a meaningful link between reading and other subject areas. Highly effective partnerships with parents ensure that the vast majority of pupils continue their reading at home on a very regular basis.
- Pupils of all ages are encouraged to use a range of strategies to help them read with confidence. Most pupils make good use of their knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) to read unfamiliar text.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's monitoring data confirm that the overall quality of teaching is good. Some teaching is outstanding. However, a very small proportion of teaching requires improvement, where activities are not precisely matched to pupils' next steps in learning and their progress slows.
- Careful use of assessment generally informs teachers' planning well. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 occasionally find that work is too easy, or they are expected to sit through explanations they do not need before getting on with their work. In the best lessons, teachers quickly identify such issues and adapt the task or their explanation to ensure these pupils make rapid progress.

- The work completed in pupils' books shows that teachers give them exceedingly helpful encouragement about where they have succeeded as well as feedback about what they need to do next. Pupils appreciate being able to talk with their teachers about their learning. The 'toolkits', which give guidance on skills and pupils' achievements, provide useful support for these discussions, but do not always provide enough precise detail about pupils' future targets and their next steps in learning.
- Lessons are well structured and a good range of equipment, including computers and other technological resources, is used effectively to motivate pupils. Frequently, teachers' questioning successfully deepens pupils' understanding, and this was seen to good effect during a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson on editing text using 'track changes'.
- Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers and make a good contribution to learning for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teachers ensure pupils have many opportunities to work together and to appreciate each other's views. For example, Year 5 pupils eagerly shared their knowledge of problem-solving strategies being attempting calculations on their own.
- The teaching of reading is well organised and includes the successful teaching of phonics. Pupils who find reading more challenging are helped by additional opportunities to read with an adult.
- At present there is not enough outstanding teaching to lead to outstanding achievement throughout the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are highly positive about their school and enjoy learning. They say that they all get along very well and that they can speak to an adult if they are worried about anything, or use the 'worry box'.
- The vast majority of pupils behave exceptionally well around the school and in their lessons. The school has clear procedures for the effective management and support for pupils who find behaving well difficult. The few pupils whose behaviour can be challenging are supported very well, and consistent application of agreed approaches means that their behaviour remains good in lessons so that learning is not disrupted.
- The school has close working relationships with a number of outside specialists to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Attendance is above average.
- Virtually all parents who responded to the online questionnaire or spoke to inspectors judged behaviour to be excellent, although a few expressed concerns about some pupils' inappropriate behaviour. The senior leadership team's presence around the school builds stronger relationships and diffuses any potentially difficult situations.
- Pupils display exemplary manners to each other and to adults in all aspects of school life. This contributes to a very safe, caring, supportive and nurturing environment.
- Pupils are fully aware of what would constitute bullying, including prejudice-based and cyber bullying. They are adamant that bullying does not exist in the school and stated that 'it would

not be tolerated’.

- The school’s value code makes a marked contribution to pupils’ behaviour. The increasing numbers of late arrivals to the school are quickly integrated, and both understand and conform to the very high standards of behaviour that are expected.
- Parents said their children are safe and exceptionally well cared for. This view is reflected in the confidence expressed by pupils that they are very safe at school.
- Pupils greatly appreciate the early morning breakfast club and the after-school club, which provide a calm and sociable start and end to the school day. All groups of pupils are eager to contribute to their school, for example as school councillors, junior road safety officers and ‘buddies’. This has a positive impact on their personal development.
- Through a well-planned curriculum, pupils are helped to develop a range of strategies so they are able to manage everyday risks for themselves, such as those associated with the internet, fire and roads.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by the other senior leaders, provides a clear vision for improving the learning, performance and opportunities for every pupil. An increased focus on basic literacy skills, higher expectations and greater accountability have put the school on a firm footing from which to secure further improvement.
- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have successfully focused on ensuring that most teaching is at least good. They have identified rightly that the next step is to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. Performance management and professional development are used effectively to help staff realise the school’s raised expectations of teaching and learning.
- The excellent pastoral care provided by senior leaders means that pupils and staff feel valued, and this is reflected in the good care and strong relationships that staff show to pupils. Staff feel challenged and supported to perform to the best of their ability and work well together as a cohesive team.
- A thorough tracking system and regular monitoring activities ensure that the senior leadership team has a realistic view of the school’s performance. Through regular pupil progress meetings, staff are held accountable for pupils’ performance.
- The curriculum is well organised and has an appropriately sharp focus on basic skills. Pupils say they enjoy the ‘theme’ approach to learning that links subjects together, and recalled with pleasure many of their recent activities, especially the residential trip, whole-class music tuition and sporting opportunities, including inter-school competitions – they were county athletics champions last year.
- The school promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. School assemblies foster a strong sense of community, celebrate achievement and encourage reflection. All groups of pupils participate well in the wide range of after-school clubs on offer.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity in all its work while ensuring that any discrimination is quickly tackled. Pupils’ progress is tracked closely, with particular attention to the performance of different groups. Well-managed use of the pupil premium ensures that all groups achieve

equally well, and all pupils are supported to take full advantage of all the school has to offer.

- The school provides many opportunities for parents to be kept informed of their children's progress.
- The transition periods when pupils join or leave the school are well managed well. Children starting school benefit from good links with pre-school providers. This ensures that their needs are met as soon as they arrive.
- The local authority has worked with the school to ensure that its self-evaluation is accurate. Close working links with a range of other schools in the local area provides additional opportunities for staff to share their working practices. They also enable more support for gifted and talented pupils, and training for staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - ensures, together with senior leaders, that all statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met
 - provides good financial management, for example to ensure that pupil premium funding has a positive impact on pupils' achievement
 - has a good grasp of the strengths of the school, and is clear about the next steps it needs to take to improve further.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 121922 |
| Local authority | Northamptonshire |
| Inspection number | 402064 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 246 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Nanette Lovell |
| Headteacher | Sally O'Neill |
| Date of previous school inspection | 24 September 2009 |
| Telephone number | 01604 751336 |
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