

Surrey Street Primary School

Cutenhoe Road, Luton, LU1 3NJ

Inspection dates 28 January–11 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although there have been recent improvements in the quality of teaching, leaders and governors have not yet secured sustained improvement in achievement for all groups of pupils.
- Leaders have not all had the time they need to carry out their management roles. They have not ensured that whole-school policies are consistently followed by all staff.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below the national average, at the end of Year 6.
- Too few pupils make good progress in phonics (the sounds letters make), and attainment in the Year 1 screening check is low.
- Too often, work is not challenging for pupils, especially for the most able.
- Marking is not consistently effective across the school. It does not do enough to help pupils improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- The early years provides a stimulating environment with good teaching so that children settle quickly and flourish.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding are attaining higher standards than other pupils at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils get on well together at break times and support each other well. They have positive attitudes to learning, behave well and feel safe.
- Leaders and governors have tackled underperformance, resulting in improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum gives pupils a varied range of experiences that contribute strongly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Topics give pupils opportunities to reflect on each others' cultural, language and religious backgrounds.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited 23 lessons, some jointly with the deputy headteacher. As well as observing lessons, inspectors studied pupils' books and the school's records of their progress. Inspectors attended two assemblies. In addition, two inspectors visited the school on 11 February 2015 to collect further evidence.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, other staff with responsibility for areas of the school's work and with pupils. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body.
- Inspectors listened to several pupils read.
- Responses from 25 parents and carers to the Ofsted parent view survey, and letters and emails were taken into consideration, as well as conversations with a number of parents in the playground.
- Inspectors took into account the 43 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including records of pupils' behaviour and the school development plan. They looked at leaders' records, which showed the impact of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Gillian Bosschaert, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Linda Allison	Additional Inspector
Mark Jones	Additional Inspector
Christopher Parker	Additional Inspector
Vreta Bagilhole	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Surrey Street Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. It moved to its present location in April 2013 to accommodate the increasing numbers of pupils in the area.
- The number of classes in each year group has increased from one to three in Years 1 to Year 3. There are currently two classes in Years 4 and 5 and one in Year 6.
- There are two Reception classes, and a third is due to open in the summer term. Early years provision is full time.
- Most pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. They come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. This is a much higher proportion than seen in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is almost twice the national average. This additional funding is for pupils in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school partway through their primary education. This mobility has been particularly high in Year 1.
- Many new members of staff have joined the school since the last inspection due to the increase in the number of classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - the most-able pupils are set work that challenges and extends their learning
 - the marking policy is consistently applied in all classes so that pupils throughout the school know what they need to do to improve their work
 - staff have the appropriate skills in teaching phonics so that pupils are able to apply their knowledge systematically and confidently to their reading and writing.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - staff with leadership roles have time to carry out their management responsibilities
 - all whole-school policies are consistently followed by staff.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have successfully managed the move to the new building with its rapidly expanding population while minimising disruption to pupils and staff. However, difficulty in recruiting teachers has meant that some senior leaders have part-time class responsibilities. This limits the time they have for their management responsibilities, including the time available to support other staff.
- Not all subject leaders have had the opportunity to observe colleagues, in order to improve the quality of teaching, because the priority has been given to making improvements in English and mathematics. However, they are aware of strengths and areas to develop in teaching through discussion and their monitoring of pupils' books.
- Leaders have developed whole-school policies aimed at securing improvements in teaching and achievement, for example, to ensure that teachers' marking is effective. However, leaders have not ensured that the policies are consistently followed by all staff.
- Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of teaching is focused on raising standards. This has resulted in a steady increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level. However, too few pupils reach higher levels of attainment in mathematics, reading and writing by the end of Year 6.
- All leaders, including governors, have action plans to improve their performance. Improvements in teaching and standards are linked to the school plan which has correctly identified the areas for improvement. Training has yet to ensure, however, that all staff are skilled in teaching phonics.
- The early years staff team are well led and managed, with the result that children make good progress over their first year at the school.
- Primary school sports funding enables the pupils to benefit from additional sporting activities. For example, various sports are provided, such as netball, cricket and football. New equipment has been purchased for the playgrounds, with the aim of developing more healthy lifestyles and better physical well-being for the pupils. Consequently, pupils are more active at break times and clubs are well-attended.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. As a consequence, pupils show consideration and respect for others and have a good understanding of different cultures and faiths.
- The school has positive relationships with the group of local churches that take assemblies fortnightly, and also with parents and carers. Leaders show a strong commitment to welcoming pupils of all backgrounds and abilities, and giving them all an equal chance to succeed. They have had notable success with disadvantaged pupils, whose attainment now exceeds that of their classmates because pupil premium funds are used effectively. They have had less success in ensuring that the most-able pupils achieve their full potential.
- Pupils are helped to appreciate the importance of values such as democracy, respect and tolerance. For example, pupils have to canvass for a place on the school council and are voted into position. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum incorporates a rich variety of topics. The school website keeps parents informed about the topics to be covered during the term. There is a good programme of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. For example, a visiting drama group performed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. A visiting artist worked with the pupils to produce the exquisite Aboriginal artwork which is displayed around the school.
- The school has developed a culture of nurture and respect for pupils. Statutory requirements for the safeguarding of pupils are fully met. Child protection training is up to date and staff know who to report to should they have any concerns. All necessary checks are carried out on staff, volunteers and governors to ensure that pupils are safe.

- The local authority makes three visits a year to check standards and offer training if necessary. Standards and progress are discussed but the quality of teaching has not been monitored. The authority supports the governing body by helping it to set objectives for the headteacher's performance management.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have produced their own plan of action following a review and audit of skills within the governing body. As a result, they are increasingly holding the school to account for its performance. Governors regularly visit the school to observe teaching and talk to pupils and teachers. This helps them to make confident decisions on how teachers perform and whether pay rises and promotion are justified. They have a good understanding about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in relation to other similar schools.
- Governors attend all relevant training, including on safeguarding and on interpreting school performance data. They have overseen the use of the pupil premium funding and regularly discuss this at meetings to ensure that the money is used effectively and that eligible pupils make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school. They behave well in classes and around the school. The school is a happy one where pupils from many different cultures and backgrounds work and play together in harmony. Pupils are keen to work hard and they enjoy sharing and listening to each other's ideas.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive; pupils quickly respond to teachers' instructions in lessons and feel secure in well-established routines. For example, pupils routinely discuss ideas with their 'talk partners', which helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills. They have good attitudes to learning.
- When pupils come together – for example, in whole-school assemblies – they are polite and courteous. They hold open doors and can be heard to say 'please' and 'thank you' to each other without being prompted.
- Pupils are clear that the school rules are for a purpose and say that detention works in improving behaviour. Parents, pupils and staff endorse the inspectors' judgement that behaviour is good. External agencies and shopkeepers comment on how well the pupils behave out of school.
- The school has called on extra support from the local authority to help improve attendance. Parents are contacted on the first day of absence and, for persistent absentees, confirmation that a doctor has been visited is needed to support the claim that illness has prevented a child attending school. This has resulted in improving attendance, which is now in line with the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school. Pupils who were spoken to say that bullying is rare and that staff respond quickly if it happens. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including bullying related to social media and the internet.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe outside school, including on the road. 'Bikeability' lessons help them to understand road safety.
- Safeguarding policies are rigorously applied and the procedures are followed by all staff. Staff safeguarding training is regularly updated. The building is very secure. Parents, staff and pupils say that pupils are kept safe.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because its impact on pupils' achievement is not consistently good across the school. Inadequacies in teaching are successfully addressed by senior leaders. With new and some inexperienced staff, some policies are not consistently adhered to, with the result that there is too much variation in the quality of work in pupils' books.
- Occasionally, during reading sessions, for example, a number of pupils found the work too easy because adults' questions were not challenging enough to make them think harder. This meant that pupils' understanding of the text was weak. Written questions provided for pupils to respond to in their book reviews also lacked challenge. Sometimes, teachers' explanations confuse rather than help pupils. In some pupils' books, teachers' handwriting did not set a good example for pupils.
- Senior leaders have established systems to check pupils' progress. However, some teachers do not use the information on pupils' progress to set work that stretches all pupils to achieve well. For example, the most-able learners often find the work too easy.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is not consistently good, although some good teaching was seen during the inspection. Lower-ability readers are not consistently using their phonic knowledge to help them break down words without being prompted to do so. This weaker teaching is reflected in the below-average results in the Year 1 phonics reading check.
- The school is making effective use of the systems for tracking pupils' progress to identify underachieving pupils quickly and give them effective additional support. However, not enough of the most-able pupils in Key Stage 2 are being identified as having the potential to do better.
- There are strengths in the quality of teaching. Relationships between pupils and staff are good. Pupils feel secure and ready to learn. Pupils listen well to teachers. There is a strong emphasis on speaking and listening to help develop pupils' understanding of the English language.
- Marking is up to date and, in the majority of classes it follows the school's policy. Teachers set out the steps pupils need to take to move their learning on, and the pupils' work is subsequently checked by the teacher to ensure the pupil has understood. This helps pupils to progress in their learning. However, this is not consistent in all classes.
- Teachers manage well the numbers of pupils joining the school at different times during the year. They assess their levels in reading, writing and mathematics and group them with pupils of similar ability. Many of these pupils have very little command of English. In classes, there is a strong emphasis on speaking and listening to help develop pupils as English language speakers.
- Artwork around the school is of high quality. Displays are attractive and provide a stimulating environment, both in classrooms and around the public areas. Evidence of different types of writing encourages pupils to reflect on their own work. All staircases have 'number bonds' and 'multiplication facts' on each step, giving pupils a constant reminder of these important areas of learning.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Most of the pupils in Year 6 reached the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics in the end of Key Stage 2 tests, in 2014. However, too few pupils made good progress in Key Stage 2 and reached higher levels of attainment in these subjects. Pupils' performance in English grammar, punctuation and spelling compared more favourably with national figures with over half of the pupils attaining the higher level.
- The work in pupils' books and school data on their progress indicate that teachers are not challenging pupils enough to make better progress. Consequently, those who start Key Stage 2 with higher levels of attainment do not make fast enough progress to reach high standards by the end of Year 6.

- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the phonic screening check in Year 1 was well below the national average in 2014. However, many pupils joined this year group during the course of the year and some spoke little or no English.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6, in 2014, made better progress than their classmates and were two terms ahead of them in reading, writing and mathematics. Good use is made of the additional funding to support individuals and groups. Disadvantaged pupils were still two terms behind other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics although the gap is closing. In English grammar, punctuation and spelling disadvantaged pupils were close to attaining the standards reached by other pupils nationally.
- The most-able pupils make similar progress to that of their classmates. They do not make consistently good progress across subjects because they are sometimes asked to do tasks that are too easy. Some reading books are not sufficiently challenging and there is a lack of opportunity for them to extend their mathematical thinking.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with the other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. However, their progress is improving over time.

The early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress in the early years provision because teaching is strong. Phonics is taught well in the early years and lively activities make learning enjoyable.
- Children start in the Reception classes with significant gaps in their development, especially in language and communication, speaking and listening, and social and emotional skills. Children join at different times throughout the year because their parents are recent arrivals in this country. Last year, a third of the children joined Reception during the year.
- The early years environment is stimulating and nurturing. Children settle quickly because staff consistently apply routines which enable children to feel safe and secure. An increasing number of children are getting close to reaching the level of development expected for their age. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, they are ready to benefit from the full range of learning opportunities provided. Adults successfully support children to make good progress in developing their fluency in spoken English, which is a particular focus.
- Children move around indoor and outdoor areas easily and safely. There is a good level of supervision from adults, all of whom know the children well. Adults provide memorable learning experiences for the children. For example, during the inspection, the children visited a local park on a 'Gruffalo hunt'. This led to a number of related activities, including making Gruffalo masks and adults retelling the story, making good use of the pictures to extend the children's vocabulary.
- The school is making increasingly good use of the systems for tracking children's progress. Teachers identify underachieving children quickly and give them effective additional support.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. Teachers are enthusiastic and records well kept. The staff form an effective team who manage children's behaviour well. Children are encouraged to share equipment and play cooperatively, giving them a good introduction to the good behaviour expected in the rest of the school.

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	109571
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	456023

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	437
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Jones
Headteacher	Denise Meadows
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2011
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