

Langdale Primary School

Langdale Road, Newcastle, Staffordshire ST5 3QE

Inspection dates

11–12 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and the chair of the governing body are ambitious for the pupils at Langdale. These recent appointments have helped to improve school performance through more effective leadership.
- Teaching and outcomes are now good. Teaching in every year group has improved over the past 12 months. This is the result of effective support and challenge from leaders for teachers.
- Leadership has good capacity for further improvement. Subject leaders and other middle leaders are developing skills which support senior leaders well.
- Leaders and teachers use information about how well pupils are achieving to agree changes in teaching practice. This has enabled pupils to make better progress than in previous years, in particular those who need to make more rapid progress in order to reach the standards required.
- Pupils who demonstrate that they are capable of attaining higher standards are not challenged as effectively as they could be.
- Funding is used well to address barriers which pupils face in their learning. This includes work with all disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Boys now make similar rates of progress to girls. However, they need to make better progress in order to catch up with the girls.
- Children experience good provision in the early years. They develop curiosity, and are keen to investigate the topics taught.
- Pupils are kept safe. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Pupils trust staff and so will discuss any concerns they have with them.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and in lessons. This creates an orderly environment, with lessons rarely disturbed by unwanted behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, not least because the curriculum interests them. As a result, they attend well. No group of pupils is adversely affected by poor attendance.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, and as a result raise standards, by
 - ensuring that the most able pupils and those capable of attaining higher standards receive sufficient challenge in reading, writing and mathematics
 - raising the challenge provided for boys in their reading and writing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The recently appointed headteacher, ably supported by her senior leadership team, has created a culture in the school whereby staff expect more of the pupils. This increased ambition is understood and promoted by all members of the leadership team. They know what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further.
- The headteacher has reflected on how the school previously supported and challenged staff to improve performance. She has made changes which have resulted in improved quality of teaching. More frequent meetings, which explore how well different groups of pupils are progressing, help staff understand what they need to do to enhance their own practice. This includes a focus on raising boys' attainment in reading and writing.
- There are examples of particularly strong leadership. These include provision in all phases of the school. Leaders work well collaboratively. They discuss various aspects of school work which influence pupils' performance and take into account the views of staff and parents. Teaching approaches have been changed as a result.
- The capacity for leadership to improve further is good. The headteacher knows which staff are keen to develop their leadership skills. Examples include teachers who currently lead on subjects other than English and mathematics. One teacher has attended training which has resulted in more effective provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Specific training has been arranged to enable this leader to develop other skills to broaden his impact on school performance.
- The school's relationship with the local authority is strong. The local authority representative knows the school well and how senior leaders have improved the school. The school has been asked by the local authority to share aspects of its good practice with other schools, including the early years provision.
- Leaders are determined to tackle any barriers that different groups of pupils face in their learning. This includes all pupils who are disadvantaged. Every half term, leaders dedicate time to discuss with each teacher reasons why any pupils are not making sufficient progress. Changes are then made to how these pupils are taught. Subsequent meetings are used to check if this has resulted in improved progress. The few disadvantaged pupils who are most able make sufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Support for newly appointed staff is effective. Staff are made aware of the importance of safeguarding prior to taking up their appointments. Newly qualified teachers are mentored well. Senior leaders meet with the teachers frequently to discuss their performance. These teachers appreciate the valuable day-to-day support they receive from other colleagues.
- The leadership team monitors teaching and learning well. This has helped leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. The curriculum is well designed as it enables pupils to experience a range of topics, including spending appropriate amounts of time exploring each other's opinions. Such work enables pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.

- Pupils articulate their understanding of the importance of issues relating to equality and diversity well. As a result, pupils show tolerance and respect in the way they work and socialise with their peers. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Langdale makes effective use of its primary school physical education (PE) and sport funding. It has ensured that its aim of encouraging pupils to develop healthier lifestyles by taking more regular physical activity has been met. Sports coaches have been employed. They teach sports to pupils and support staff in creating more opportunities for pupils to take exercise. A running circuit has been created, which pupils enjoy outside of lessons.
- Leaders use information about pupils' achievement to identify groups who could achieve better standards. They know that pupils with high prior starting points, and others who are capable of attaining high standards, are not currently challenged as well as they could be.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
- The relationship between the recently appointed chair of the governing body and the headteacher is effective. They share the same aspirations for Langdale. As a result of the governing body being restructured, governors are now better informed about the quality of teaching.
- Individual governors have specific links with school staff. Written descriptions of their roles are designed to support governors in checking out the impact of work on the pupils. This helps governors secure their understanding of what makes teaching effective. They use this knowledge to challenge the headteacher's view of the quality of teaching in the school. Governors only reward good teaching.
- Governors' discussions at meetings are well informed. Governors read reports from their colleagues, feeding back on what they have learned from their link visits to the school. They also receive reports from the headteacher and other leaders which provide an update on developments. Leaders attend the meetings to discuss their work. As a result of this package of information, governors are kept well informed and so are able to hold the school to account.
- Governors make it their business to ensure that the well-being of staff is a priority. Staff recognise and acknowledge this. For example, they appreciate the time made available for them to not only carry out their duties, but also reflect on their work.
- Through discussion with senior leaders, governors understand the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities face. They ensure that funding is used to enable changes in teaching practice. This results in pupils making better progress than previously.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff receive timely, relevant training. They are vigilant, listening and looking out for any signs of concern shown by pupils. All relevant policies are kept up to date, agreed by governors and understood by staff. All statutory duties are met, including those relating to safeguarding.

- Governors are aware of the importance of safeguarding. They use their visits to school to check that staff follow agreed procedures appropriately. They talk with staff and pupils to help them understand any current issues. One governor has specific responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the school's work.
- Pupils, parents and staff are confident that the school's work to keep pupils safe is effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the start of the last calendar year, teaching has improved well in all year groups and subjects. This is because leaders and teachers have made changes which have proved to be effective. For example, time is made available at the start of each week for teachers to work with pupils who have not demonstrated a good understanding of their work during the previous week.
- Pupils' achievement information is now better presented and it enables teachers to quickly identify those pupils falling behind in their learning. Teachers use this information, together with secure knowledge about the different subjects they teach, to inform subsequent work with pupils. This has resulted in pupils making better progress than previously.
- Disadvantaged pupils of all abilities are taught well. Individual pupils' barriers to learning are well understood and tackled effectively. The progress of this group of pupils is always discussed at meetings held every half term. Changes are made according to individual pupils' needs. This group of pupils make good progress as a result. Effective use of funding means that most-able disadvantaged pupils make better progress than their classmates who have similar ability.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are strong. Pupils trust both classmates and staff to provide valuable advice to help them learn better. In Year 6, for example, pupils were writing using complex grammar, which enabled them to convey their ideas with conviction. Teachers, teaching assistants and peers contributed to this by suggesting to pupils how their writing could be improved.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are taught well. The coordinator ensures that teaching assistants are deployed effectively. The sessions they deliver enable individual pupils and small groups to make good progress.
- The school's approach to homework has been reviewed recently. The intention is to support parents better so that they can engage more with their children when they learn at home. Creative examples of such work can be seen around the school. These include models of arctic scenes displayed in the early years. Pupils talk about their enjoyment of learning mathematics skills online at home.
- Children secure early reading skills in Nursery and Reception. Here, they learn and consolidate initial phonic skills well. Classroom staff teach reading skills well to pupils as they progress through key stages 1 and 2. Teachers give pupils with less-secure reading skills books that challenge them well. They show a good understanding of what the authors are writing about.

- Teachers frequently check whether pupils are using required skills in their writing, including punctuation and grammar. Books seen during the inspection confirm leaders' views that progress in writing is now good. Pupils use neat joined handwriting across different subjects.
- Pupils' books show that they rehearse and consolidate their mathematical skills well. There is a good balance between this consolidation and developing reasoning and problem-solving skills. When pupils show that they have not grasped specific concepts, teaching addresses this effectively.
- Some inequalities remain. Boys are taught reading and writing better now than previously. Teachers deliver topics which stimulate boys' interest well. Despite boys making good progress, they do not yet attain as well as the girls in reading and writing.
- The most able pupils, together with those who are showing that they can attain high standards, do not make the progress they are capable of. In reading, teachers do not ask enough questions which require these pupils to use harder skills, such as inference and deduction. In writing, there is variability between year groups. This means that pupils are not expected to always use more demanding grammar and punctuation skills accurately in their writing. In mathematics, tasks set by teachers are not hard enough as these pupils cope too easily with the tasks set.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The curriculum at Langdale has been designed to encourage pupils to debate and share ideas. Teachers find time in lessons for pupils to collaborate. This contributes well to pupils' personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of different cultures through a range of experiences planned through each year group. These include visits to places of worship. Pupils understand what it is like to follow different faiths, showing empathy in their discussions. Empathy is also seen in how well Langdale pupils welcome pupils from other countries. Pupils understand the importance of valuing diversity and, as a result, there is no evidence of discrimination.
- Pupils' physical well-being is promoted well at the school. Staff take frequent opportunities, both during lessons and at breaktimes, to encourage pupils to be physically active. Pupils understand the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle.
- Bullying is very rare at Langdale. Pupils understand what bullying is and how it upsets people. This includes how bullying can occur when playing online. Pupils understand how the school's computer systems are designed to keep them safe. They talk about the importance of being vigilant when online and what to do if they become concerned.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are courteous and show good manners around school. They are respectful of others and of their surroundings. This helps to maintain an orderly environment where

pupils feel safe.

- Parents and pupils are confident that staff deal with any poor behaviour well. During the inspection, there was very little low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils are keen to learn and want to listen to teachers' and classmates' comments. Such attitudes contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' work in their books is neat and well presented. This demonstrates that pupils take pride in their work. In lessons, pupils listen to adults' guidance as they trust that such information will help them improve their work further. Good examples were seen when teachers and teaching assistants worked with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils' overall attendance rates are similar to the national average. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. School staff have worked hard to improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent. As a result of effective engagement with parents, persistent absence rates have fallen this year.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Over recent years, pupils' attainment by the end of key stage 2 has been variable. For example, pupils' attainment in mathematics has been both well above and well below the national average. This has meant that pupils leaving Langdale at the end of Year 6 have not always been well prepared for their move into secondary education. This year, pupils' progress rates are good.
- Variability in outcomes has also been evident at the end of key stage 1. Last year, pupils attained well from their different starting points. Disadvantaged pupils also attained well.
- For the past two years, a higher proportion of Langdale pupils than of all pupils nationally achieved the standard required in the Year 1 phonics screening check. This year these standards are being maintained.
- This year pupils are making better progress in all year groups and subjects than previously. This is because of improved teaching, which is enabling pupils to reach higher standards each term. As a result, fewer pupils need to catch up to reach the required standards. However, despite pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 making good progress currently, the majority are yet to reach the standards required. This is due to weaker teaching in previous years.
- Pupils build well on their secure understanding of phonics. The majority of pupils attain reading standards required for their year group, with weaker readers making good progress currently. Pupils use their reading skills well in learning about topics taught in other subjects.
- Over the past 12 months, pupils use accurate grammar and punctuation skills more consistently in their writing. This is helping them present their ideas coherently when they write about different subjects.
- A greater proportion of pupils than in previous years are now reaching standards required in mathematics. This is owing to better teaching. It ensures that pupils have opportunities to both consolidate their understanding of mathematical facts and

develop reasoning and problem-solving skills well.

- Some pupils are capable of attaining higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils include those who are most able and also those who demonstrate that they can cope with more-challenging work.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils did not attain the standards they were capable of by the end of Year 6. School leaders are aware of this and have used funding to make changes to ensure that this group of pupils makes at least good progress. This year disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, are achieving well.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. This is because school leaders and staff are ambitious about what this group of pupils can achieve. This means that they set challenging work which the pupils enjoy. As a result, these pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Despite the gap closing, boys' attainment still lags behind that of the girls in reading and writing. Boys are making good progress currently.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is effective. The leader with responsibility for provision in the early years articulates the purpose of the curriculum clearly. She ensures that teaching helps children develop positive attitudes to learning. The children display curiosity in the activities they engage with.
- Children make good progress through the early years. Most children enter the early years with skills that are typical for their age. Over the past two years, a greater proportion of children, when compared with all children across the country, have reached and exceeded standards expected at the end of Reception. As a result, children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- All groups perform well, including boys and any pupils who are disadvantaged. Funding has been used well to improve progress and attainment for disadvantaged children. Resources and support from external services (including speech and language) have been purchased which have helped staff address barriers to children's learning and progress.
- Behaviour is good because children enjoy the activities they are given. They are interested in their learning and so stick to tasks for long periods of time, exploring their own ideas. This helps them develop a secure understanding of different topics. For example, children in Reception tested out their ideas to see how they could make ice melt quickly.
- Phonics is taught effectively in both Nursery and Reception. Staff seek out opportunities to rehearse skills with children by getting them to sound out words. They do this in their day-to-day discussions with the children. This supports children's learning in dedicated phonics lessons well.
- The partnership between the school and parents is effective. Occasionally children do not demonstrate their skills and abilities in the early years setting. This makes it difficult for staff to ensure that planning of new activities will engage the children well. Parents bring in evidence from home, for example in the form of digital recordings,

which demonstrates what children can do. This partnership has helped staff gain a better understanding of children's abilities.

- Children are well cared for and kept safe. They are supervised well. Their curiosity and willingness to work and play with others contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Typically, questioning is effective. Where best, adults question children to find out their current interests and then challenge them well by setting challenges for them to investigate. Occasionally, staff do not take sufficient time engaging with the children.

School details

Unique reference number	135204
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10025177

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	406
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Herbert
Headteacher	Donna Russell
Telephone number	01782 297690
Website	www.langdaleprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@langdale.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 December 2014

Information about this school

- Langdale is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The chair of the governing body was appointed during the autumn term 2016. The headteacher has been in post for four terms. Three newly qualified teachers were appointed at the start of this academic year.
- Pupils are taught in single-age classes in the school. Children attend part time in the Nursery and full time in the Reception Year.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- Approximately 90% of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and visited small-group intervention sessions. They visited 23 lessons, eight of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the chair of the governing body and other governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading and listened to both higher- and lower-ability pupils read.
- Inspectors examined work in pupils' books.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation written to support school improvement, including minutes from meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 67 replies to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire and spoke with parents.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ellen Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector

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