

# Lobley Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108369
<b>Local authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	377744
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kate Pringle

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	386
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Canon R Hopper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S McElrue
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Rothbury Gardens Lobley Hill Gateshead NE11 0AT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen teachers and one teaching assistant were observed teaching 19 lessons. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, policies and procedures, school development plans and updates of pupils' progress. Views of stakeholders were also considered through questionnaire responses from 88 parents and carers, 28 staff and 92 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of provision and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage to promote and ensure outstanding progress.
- How effectively teaching and learning challenges all pupils to secure good progress, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- How successfully the developing curriculum provides pupils with creative opportunities to learn independently and make the best use of their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across other subjects.
- How successfully senior leaders, together with other leaders and managers, promote development to improve outcomes for pupils.

## Information about the school

Lobley Hill is a larger-than-average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who are supported by the school without input from external agencies is above average. However, the proportion of pupils receiving external support or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than levels nationally. The school hosts a centre for initial teacher training. The headteacher has been in post since September 2011 and was promoted from a longstanding senior leadership role within the school.

The school holds the full International School Award and also has Healthy Schools Status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It has great strengths in the outstanding care, guidance and support it provides for pupils and in forging excellent partnerships with other organisations and agencies to support their learning. Another major strength is the outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils demonstrate high levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. They are extremely thoughtful of their own actions, and those of others, having an excellent perception of the consequences of any action they take. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and demonstrate high standards in behaviour. Average attendance belies the enthusiasm of pupils towards their learning as the greater proportion of absence is due to authorised holidays during term time. The school recognises the impact this is having on absence levels and is working to address the issue. Communication with parents and carers is exceptional. The vast majority of those who responded to the questionnaire are greatly supportive of the school. They recognise the high quality of care and tell of good progress made by their children, a listening staff and of the many and increasing opportunities they have to engage in their children's learning. One comment reflective of many received notes: '...a fantastic school and we are thoroughly pleased with the progress our children are making. The changes so far this year are building on this.'

Overall, children make good progress from starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which are largely below and in some areas well below expected levels for their age, to reach national average standards when they leave Year 6. Pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive and are motivated to achieve well, building upon the excellent provision in the Nursery and Reception classes. The positive impact of strategies to improve the quality of reading and writing are evident in the rising attainment in Key Stages 1 and 2. Improvements in mathematics are more variable, however, with fewer opportunities for pupils to problem-solve, investigate and to use their developing skills across other areas of the curriculum. Good classroom management and interesting activities are well-matched to individual needs, enabling all pupils to progress well.

Leadership is exceptional. Although the headteacher is relatively new in post, she has been a member of the senior leadership team for many years and has played a considerable part in developing the school. Her vision for the school builds upon its strengths and steers a clear programme for improvement. Together with the governing body, all leaders are integral to rigorous and accurate school self-

evaluation. Leaders use their knowledge to identify where improvements are needed and action precise and effective strategies to bring this about. This can be seen in the rapid improvements in reading and writing, the reduction of persistent absentees, the developing outdoor curriculum and the improved outcomes at each stage of learning. The quality of safeguarding systems and practice is exceptional with high quality systems and documentation supporting realistic, practical and thorough procedures that address all aspects of school life. Clear priorities for wider development are identified for further improvement and the consistent address of action plans by staff means that many of these are well underway and are already showing some impact upon pupils' outcomes. Many of the improvements identified are relatively recent and have not yet been sustained over a considerable period of time. Consequently, the school has a good capacity for sustaining improvement. It provides good value for money.

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

- Raise attainment in mathematics to at least match that in English, by:
  - improving the use of assessment data to plan challenging activities for pupils which are well-matched to their individual needs
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to learn together using investigation to develop problem-solving skills
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to use mathematics across other subjects.
- Reduce absence levels by:
  - working with parents and carers to ensure that all pupils attend regularly
  - reducing the levels of authorised absence for holidays during school time.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2
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Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well as a result. They are keen to succeed and please their teachers. They engage eagerly, answer questions enthusiastically and demonstrate good concentration. For example, in one English lesson, pupils reflected upon the use of language in a 'nonsense' poem as they considered 'real' words to convey a similar feeling in their own poem.

Pupils demonstrate good progress over Key Stage 1 with a rising trend of improvement over recent years to levels which are now national average from their historically below average starting points in Year 1. There is a similar picture over Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress and leave Year 6 at expected levels. Present standards in reading and writing are now above average while in mathematics, which can be more variable, attainment is presently average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils who are potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances make equally good progress because of highly effective strategies to support their individual learning needs and the excellent personal care, guidance and support they receive.

Pupils engage exceptionally well with other children and with adults. They practise a strong social and moral code which is reflected in their excellent behaviour. As a consequence, pupils feel extremely safe. They understand that other children can

very occasionally be less well behaved because of their individual needs, and provide friendship and support for them to engage more positively. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and enjoy taking responsibility to help others through their roles as school councillors and members of the 'play squad'. They have a good appreciation of others from more diverse cultures. A number of pupils take advantage of additional activities to keep fit. This is supported by an equally good understanding of a healthy diet and the dangers of substance abuse. Pupils' average attendance is mostly due to the authorisation of holidays during term time. Pupils leave the school ready for the next stage in their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	3
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	3
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding but is mostly good. Carefully-planned lessons motivate interest and pupils engage well. Pupils' skills and understanding are extended because teachers check to ensure that pupils understand when they meet lesson objectives. Teachers know well the levels pupils are working at and most use this information to prepare activities which challenge and promote good progress. Where progress is less than good, tasks are less well-matched to individual abilities. This is more evident in mathematics lessons where there can also be fewer opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills independently and across other subjects to investigate and problem-solve. Overall, teachers use assessment of pupils' attainment well and use this particularly effectively to challenge pupils' writing abilities although the use of assessment data to plan challenging activities in mathematics lessons is less strong.

The developing curriculum is providing ever greater opportunities for pupils to engage in experiences which further their knowledge of the wider world and the opportunities it brings. Very recent developments to extend the use of the outdoor environment, including the Forest School, have increased enthusiasm for learning independently as they recognise a practical use for their emerging skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across subjects. New initiatives, for example, to support reading through ICT and changes to

<sup>1</sup>The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

homework, are enabling more parents and carers to become involved in their children's learning. A range of visits and visitors enhances experiences as does the extensive provision of activities provided after school. Additional initiatives for pupils to be taught by specialist teachers in the afternoon in Years 5 and 6 are proving to be very effective in developing skills and increasing motivation and interest.

Pupils speak highly of the outstanding care, guidance and support they receive and their parents and carers agree. Extremely close links with the trainee teachers means that the school is able to utilise well-focused additional adult teaching on a regular basis which increases the pace of learning. Early identification of individual need is given particular emphasis so that pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are very well supported using outstanding links with an impressive range of external partners and agencies. Successful work with individual families has reduced the levels of persistent absenteeism and the school has highlighted the interruption to learning when holidays are taken during term time. Links with parents and carers generally are highly effective with numerous opportunities for them to engage in their children's learning. Equally impressive links enable pupils to transfer seamlessly to secondary school with maximum confidence.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have an excellent understanding of the school and share, with the governing body, a clear and ambitious vision for future improvement. The development of the 'whole child' is central to the ethos of the school and great efforts ensure that pupils are happy and learn well. The headteacher has rapidly redefined her role within the school. Staff, governors, parents and carers appreciate the ease, and speed, with which she has sustained the strengths of the school while increasing the pace of action to improve provision. Good monitoring of teaching and learning by leaders contributes to effective learning. Morale is very high. All leaders contribute to the evaluation of school effectiveness and are active in their roles to implement change. The governing body is proactive and fully involved in determining the strategic direction of the school. It assures high-quality safeguarding practice demonstrating exemplary documentation, procedures, training and practice. Overall, governance is good and individual members work together effectively with a view to developing their roles and responsibilities even further.

Outstanding partnerships with other organisations, agencies, parent and carers support pupils' learning, the curriculum and the quality of care, guidance and support. Staff use well-embedded systems to track individual pupils, rapidly addressing underachievement to ensure that all make similarly good progress. High-quality training impacts sharply upon areas of development, for example, in the

recent emphasis on reading and writing where clear improvement can already be identified. Equal opportunities are promoted well, evident in the equally good progress of different groups across the school. Local and international links are strengths of the school and communication with diversity at a national level is developing apace and promoting community cohesion well.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter with skills below those expected for their age. Of these, a significant proportion has skills which are well below, especially in reading and calculation. Children make significant gains in their learning as a result of good data analysis with subsequent personalised programmes to address individual needs. Latest assessments show increased attainment at the end of Reception with children now achieving above average levels except in reading and calculation, which are below average. This represents very strong improvement from previous cohorts' below average attainment when they started Year 1. Progress in all areas is outstanding, especially in personal and social development. Children demonstrate excellent behaviour and quickly learn how to share and socialise together. They play a significant part in planning their learning through 'plan, do and review' which enables them to pursue their own areas of interest.

The welcoming and attractive environment ensures that all areas of learning are promoted well and the improvements to the outdoor area, including the more recent 'Forest School' initiative provide innovative opportunities to link learning. For example, children hearing the story of 'The Gruffalo' hunted for thick and thin sticks to build 'a house for mouse' thereby extending their previous day's learning of the sound 'th'. The leader of the setting has high aspirations and the team works with a common sense of purpose. Assessment is of high quality, based upon observations of children's investigations. Learning journals evidence detailed records of achievement effectively linked to children's next steps in learning, which contributes to their excellent progress. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are of exceptional quality and minimise risk. Links with parents and carers are very well embedded through home visits, excellent induction procedures and a wealth of opportunities for them to engage in their children's learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	1
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

A lower proportion of parents and carers than usual responded to the questionnaire. The vast majority of respondents were highly positive about the school. They greatly appreciate the care given to their children and are extremely confident that their children are happy and safe and that teachers meet their children’s needs well. Few issues were raised by parents and carers and there was no obvious pattern to those raised. All were fully investigated and form part of the evidence base used to arrive at the inspection judgements.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lobley Hill Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 386 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	68	28	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	52	41	47	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	47	53	39	44	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	60	32	36	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	68	28	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	60	33	38	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	58	36	41	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	54	61	29	33	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	61	31	35	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	49	39	44	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	48	38	43	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	52	59	34	39	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	67	29	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



28 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Lobley Hill Primary School, Gateshead NE11 0AT**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. You go to a good school. It has many outstanding features. We found you to be polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you. We know that you really enjoy coming to school, where you feel extremely safe and show great understanding of how to respect yourself, your friends and your teachers. We found your behaviour to be excellent.

Thank you to those of you who filled in the questionnaires. They gave us lots of information and we now know how much you appreciate your school and the staff who work there. We found that all adults in your school care exceptionally well for you and make sure that you always have someone to turn to when you have a problem. The excellent links with others from outside school make sure that your individual needs are met and you can learn without worrying. Your parents and carers know and appreciate this.

Teachers make lessons enjoyable for you and you respond by working really hard. We know that most of you attend school regularly. We would like teachers to work with your parents and carers to understand that you all need to attend school every day and for some of you to take fewer holidays during term time. We know that after an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, you make good progress in your lessons. We found that you attain better in English than you do in mathematics, so we would like your teachers to improve the progress you make in mathematics by planning activities well-matched your individual needs. We also believe that you could have more opportunities to investigate and solve problems across different subjects.

We hope that you all continue to work hard and do well.

Yours sincerely

Kate Pringle  
Lead inspector

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