

Langley Hall Primary Academy

Station Road, Langley, SL3 8BY

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- In the comparatively short time that the academy has been open, pupils have made good progress, especially in reading, mathematics, speaking and listening.
- The provision of an exceptionally wide range of learning opportunities, especially in music, physical education and drama, means that pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. They have good opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, especially in phonics (linking letters to the sounds that they make). Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and ensure that teaching meets the wide range of learning needs.
- The academy has a very positive ethos, which is reflected in the good behaviour and positive attitudes of the pupils. Pupils feel safe at school.
- Pupils in all groups, including disabled pupils and who have special educational needs, are well supported and make good progress as a result.
- Senior leaders, including governors, are managing the rapid expansion of the academy well. They have created a united staff team which works tirelessly to drive improvements further.
- Parents and carers hold the school in high regard, recognising the considerable progress that has been made in establishing and developing the academy in a very short period of time.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not all teaching is of a consistently high enough standard.
- Although pupils' achievement in writing is improving, standards of spelling, handwriting and presentation are not high enough.
- Middle leaders are not yet having enough impact on school improvement. This is because the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders are not yet fully established across the academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors evaluated the quality of teaching in every class. They observed 24 lessons, taught by 13 teachers. Some lessons were observed jointly with the head of school and senior staff.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, the head of school and staff.
- Inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work. They heard pupils read and scrutinised their work in exercise books and on classroom wall displays.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the minutes of governors' meetings, plans for what pupils learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, records of how pupils' progress and attainment are checked and tracked, and records of how the school checks on the quality of teaching.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through the scrutiny of the 49 responses to the online Parent View survey and a discussion with a representative group of parents and carers.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 28 staff members.

Inspection team

Chris Nye, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sandra Teacher

Additional inspector

John Viner

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy, which is situated in the heart of Langley Village, is part of the government's Free School initiative. The academy first opened in September 2011 with one class in each year group. However, in September 2012 the academy experienced significant changes due to its rapid expansion; the number of pupils on roll doubled, with a corresponding increase in staff, and the academy is now a larger-than-average primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one of two Reception classes. There are two single-age classes in each year group in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, there are two single-aged classes in Years 3 and 4. At the older end of the school, there is one Year 6 class, one Year 5 class and one mixed Year 5/6 class.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs that are supported by school action is smaller than in other schools. The proportion of pupils who need extra help, known as school action plus, is larger than in other schools nationally. They have a range of specific learning difficulties. A smaller than average proportion of pupils has a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for additional government funding, the pupil premium, is below the national average.
- Fewer than 30% of the pupils are from White British backgrounds, with other pupils coming from a range of backgrounds, mainly Indian. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average, although very few are at an early stage of learning English.
- There is on-site provision of breakfast and after-school clubs. No alternative or off-site provision is used.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - helping pupils to improve the quality of handwriting and presentation across all subjects
 - improving pupils' spelling
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to produce written work of greater length.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching so that it is all as good as the best by:
 - ensuring that there is a suitably brisk pace of learning in all lessons
 - ensuring that teachers' marking provides consistently clear guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work.
- Develop the roles of middle leaders so that they have a greater impact on school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Approximately half the pupils joined the academy when it opened in September 2011. These pupils are making good progress, relative to their starting points, in reading and writing, although progress in writing has not been as swift as in reading. In mathematics, they make good progress.
- There is clear evidence that pupils who joined the academy at the start of this school year have made a good start and are on track to meet or exceed the expected levels of progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage but the progress of some is variable, especially in mathematics where children make slower progress. However, in communication, language and literacy, most pupils are making good progress and are developing their independence and self-confidence.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. From low starting points, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics came close to the national average in the most recent national assessments. In the most recent Year 6 national tests, only six pupils were eligible. All made good progress and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with national expectations.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers. They are encouraged to read widely and often, and there is an exceptionally well-organised and resourced library. Phonics is taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This is illustrated by the results of the most recent phonics screening check in Year 1, which were well above average.
- In writing, standards are not as high as in reading, because skills in spelling and the quality of handwriting and presentation vary. Pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, do not always have enough opportunities to write longer pieces of work across a range of subjects.
- In mathematics, pupils across the academy make good progress. This is because a detailed calculation policy has been introduced which helps all staff teach basic skills successfully.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers because they are well supported in small groups and their needs are identified early. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who are eligible for pupil premium funding, which includes pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, also make good progress and attain well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well in music and drama, speaking and listening.
- All the parents and carers who spoke to inspectors, and the very large majority who responded to the online parent survey, said that they feel that their children make good progress. The pupils who met inspectors also expressed very positive views about their learning and progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Overall, teaching is good in all subjects, including English and mathematics, and across all key stages. The rapid establishment of excellent relationships between adults and pupils is a strength and is the main reason why pupils have settled so quickly and are making good progress. Teaching is not yet outstanding, because there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- The best lessons ensure that imaginatively planned tasks meet pupils' individual needs and encourage an enthusiasm for learning. Lesson aims are made clear and a strong emphasis during lessons is placed on pupils assessing their own and others' work and developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. For example, in one lesson, pupils were confidently evaluating each other's presentations on the arguments for and against the existence of zoos.
- Teachers check pupils' progress during lessons effectively. They use questioning well to assess

pupils' understanding and then adjust their teaching to ensure that misconceptions are addressed. They have good subject knowledge and make effective use of a range of materials to support their teaching and pupils' learning. As a result, pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards their learning and are keen to do well.

- Teaching assistants are well trained and skilful in supporting teaching and learning. They work closely with teachers and are especially effective in supporting the learning of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.
- The teaching of reading is a real strength throughout the school because adults share a passion for literature and have a good understanding of how to teach phonics.
- The academy's motto 'ad vitam paramus' ('we are preparing for life') permeates teaching and effectively encourages pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- In a short period of time, a positive climate for learning has been created. Classrooms, which are bright and attractive learning environments, are well equipped and resourced. Homework is well planned, and the effective use of electronic communication links with every pupil's home means that this is rigorously monitored, thus supporting teaching and learning well.
- Where teaching is not as good as the best, the pace of learning is not brisk enough and pupils are inactive for too long and so tend to lose concentration. Leaders are aware of where this is happening and a system of coaching is starting to address the issue.
- Pupils are aware of their targets and the academy has clear policies on marking and assessing pupils' work. However, there are some inconsistencies in how they are applied. Although teachers' written feedback identifies the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' work, the quality of guidance on how to improve it further varies. Some pupils are assessing their own and others' written work so as to develop a greater understanding of their own learning, but this is not embedded securely enough, especially in Key Stage 2.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are consistently polite to adults and demonstrate high levels of care towards each other. They have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Behaviour policies are effective and are applied fairly and consistently throughout the academy. As a result, behaviour in lessons and during break times is good. Behaviour is not outstanding because, although unusual, instances of low-level disruption were evident in a small minority of observed lessons.
- Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy coming to the academy and feel safe and well cared for. This is reflected in their attendance, which is above average. They enjoy being given responsibilities and feel that adults value their contribution towards the development of the academy.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are very rare and many said that this compares favourably with their previous schools. Pupils have a clear understanding of all forms of bullying, including racism and cyber-bullying, and know what to do if they encounter it. There is a strong sense of trust between adults and pupils and the few concerns raised by parents and carers about behaviour or safety are swiftly and effectively resolved.
- Parents and carers who met with an inspector and those who completed the online Parent View survey were positive about pupils' behaviour and how it is managed. They felt that the quality of care provided by the academy is a strength.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong drive, clear vision and high expectations of governors, the head of school and director of education have been the main reasons for the successful establishment and rapid expansion of the academy. The staff team, which doubled in size five months ago, shares a common vision and determination to make the academy a success. However, although the senior leadership is effective, the roles of middle leaders are less well established, with the result

that their impact on improving areas for which they have responsibility is not yet sufficiently secure.

- Leaders at all levels are realistic about what needs to improve at this early stage in the life of the academy. Their detailed evaluation of strengths and weaknesses is based upon accurate checks of teaching and evaluation of data relating to pupils' progress.
- Although systems are still new, information about pupils' progress is starting to be used effectively to hold teachers to account by informing their performance management targets and identifying their training or support needs. The impact of such support is closely monitored so leaders are consequentially driving improvement in the quality of teaching.
- The provision of breakfast and after-school clubs is greatly appreciated by parents. However, the meals provided do not ensure that pupils have a consistently healthy and well-balanced diet.
- The subjects that pupils study are wide-ranging and well planned. They include opportunities to develop literacy, information and communication technology and numeracy skills across all the subjects that pupils learn. A significant strength is the outstanding way in which subjects are enriched by high-quality trips, activities and specialist teaching.
- Physical education and music are particular strengths. The quality of drama productions is very high and pupils' confidence in, and enjoyment of, their learning is significantly enhanced by appearing in productions such as 'Bugsy Malone' and 'The Wizard of Oz'. As a result, the subjects that pupils learn effectively enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A significant strength is the way in which the school works with parents and carers. This is enhanced by the use of an electronic communications system which helps all parents and carers, including those who find it hard to communicate with the academy, to be kept very well informed about their child's learning and the school's activities.
- The academy makes good use of a range of external advisers and consultants to support the establishment and development of the school. They have particularly benefited from the advice given by the Department for Education on establishing themselves as a 'Free School'.
- All safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. They are securely in place and rigorously applied. Leaders at all levels effectively promote equality of opportunity and are proactive in tackling all forms of discrimination.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school is good because the governing body is well led and secure systems to hold the school to account have been quickly established. Governors are well informed and have a rapidly developing understanding of how to check how the school's performance compares with schools nationally. Governors have undertaken a detailed audit of their wide-ranging skills and have a clear understanding of the academy's future and how they will support this. A strength has been the way in which they have ensured the best use of the budget to establish the academy. They monitor the work of the academy effectively, for example in ensuring that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the achievement and welfare of disadvantaged pupils. The governors have set suitable performance targets for the head of school which clearly link to the establishment of the academy and its drive to improve standards.

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	136951
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	400328

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

Type of school	Academy free school
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	341
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Sutlieff
Headteacher	Jane Sculpher
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01753 580516
Email address	info@lhpa.co.uk

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