

Lugershall Castle Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126489
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	343793
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Shakespeare
Headteacher	Andy Bridewell
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 15 lessons or parts of lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and some Year 6 pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils' work in literacy and mathematics, curricular planning, assessment and tracking information for each year group, and the school's procedures for ensuring pupils' safety. Inspectors also considered 56 questionnaires that were received from parents and carers as well as those returned by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

The impact on pupils' progress of strategies to improve writing and mathematics across the school.

The effectiveness of the school's assessment systems and how well information is used to set targets which challenge and support the pupils appropriately.

The extent to which pupils understand what they need to do to move forward in their learning.

How effectively senior leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the impact of actions taken to improve the work of the school.

Information about the school

Lughtershall Castle is a broadly average-sized primary school. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage and few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The main areas of need are speech, communication and learning difficulties. The school has several awards including Healthy Schools, Activemark and the Green Flag eco'award. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated within a discrete Reception class and a mixed class of Reception and Year One children. At the previous inspection, the school was given a notice that it required significant improvement.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Ludgershall Castle School provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. The last year has seen significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and, as a result, levels of attainment have risen rapidly and previous underachievement has been eradicated swiftly. Although progress from their starting points remains satisfactory, pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Years 5 and 6, have made accelerated progress and are now achieving well. Attainment is broadly average in English and science. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is still below average because pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply the skills and knowledge that they have learned to solve problems and carry out investigations.

As a result of the hard work of the headteacher and senior management team over the last year, priorities for improvement were clearly identified. Action plans were drawn up and a rigorous monitoring system put in place to ensure that strategies were acted upon. The help provided by the local authority resulted in much useful training and support for staff, to which they responded with commitment and dedication. There is now a vibrancy in the school. Staff demonstrated very clearly by their uniformly positive responses to the questionnaires that they share this renewed drive for improvement. This, combined with much-improved teaching and academic outcomes for pupils, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not making such good progress as those in the rest of the school. This is because the teaching, although at least satisfactory, is not as consistently strong as that in all the other year groups. There are not always sufficiently high expectations of what the pupils can achieve in these classes and tasks are not always interesting and motivating. Consequently, pupils do not produce enough work of high quality.

Procedures for assessing pupils' learning have become much more robust. In addition, staff have a clear understanding of how to use the information from these assessments to plan pupils' learning in a more precise way. This means that all groups of pupils are generally well provided for. Pupils know and understand their targets. Most, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, know what levels they are working at and understand what they need to do to reach the next one.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors found pupils to be polite and considerate, and pupils themselves say that behaviour has improved in the last year. The play spaces are happy and harmonious areas. Pupils make a good contribution to the school, local and international communities through participation in a range of events, and through their

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awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. The curriculum is interesting and pupils enjoy the themes pursued. Nevertheless, the coverage of some subjects has suffered as a result of the understandable emphasis on English and mathematics in the last year. Pupils benefit from a good range of visitors and visits, such as those to the theatre. Pupils enthusiastically support the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. The school cares well for its pupils and provides good support for them.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 by having higher expectations of what the pupils can achieve and providing more challenging and motivating tasks for them:
 - Improve mathematics by ensuring pupils have more opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills they have gained to solve problems and carry out investigations
 - Ensure all subjects in the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth, particularly in Years 3 and 4

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

During the last year, pupils' attendance, while broadly average, has improved, reflecting their enjoyment of school life. Pupils generally listen well in lessons and enthusiastically answer questions. They work well together in pairs and small groups. This was particularly evident in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson when pupils were undertaking a 'Team Challenge' involving complex calculations. They have a good understanding of what living a healthy lifestyle entails and participate enthusiastically in a range of sporting activities. They are proud of their awards, particularly their 'Green Flag' eco-award, and make a good contribution to the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and look after each other well.

Pupils' writing throughout the school has greatly improved, particularly that in Years 5 and 6. This is because they are encouraged to discuss and plan much more rigorously and are very interested in tasks given to them. In a literacy lesson, the pupils were writing a recount of Odysseus's journey home after the Trojan war. Tasks were carefully matched to pupils' needs and, where they had particular difficulties, reinforcement tasks provided the necessary boost to their understanding. Progress in mathematics, too, shows marked improvement, but pupils are not yet sufficiently confident in applying the knowledge and skills they have gained. Pupils make good progress when tasks are interesting and motivate them. However, this is not always the case in Years 3 and 4. For example, the theme of 'Alice in Wonderland' is not exploited enough to make tasks appealing and exciting, and too much time is spent on mundane tasks such as handwriting practice instead of incorporating this into activities which are more appealing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from individual and small group support and their progress, too, has improved over the last year and is in line with that of their peers. Pupils are competent at using information and communication technology (ICT). This, together with their rapidly improving academic progress and personal development, ensures they are prepared appropriately for their future lives.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

In all lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory and much was better. However, there is not enough consistently good teaching in Years 3 and 4, which means pupils do not make as much progress. In most classes, tasks are generally interesting and pupils have appropriate opportunities to share ideas with each other or in small groups. This sustains their interest and increases the pace of their work. Pupils are beginning to develop independence through opportunities to check and assess their own work. Since the previous inspection, assessment systems have been much improved and there is more information available as to how much progress pupils are making. Most teachers are using this information effectively to ensure that pupils are adequately challenged in lessons and in setting targets for improvement over time. Marking encourages pupils to assess and improve their work. However, it is not systematically employed in all classes, which means some pupils do not understand how their work can be improved.

The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of activities which motivate and interest the pupils. Pupils have ample opportunities to consolidate their basic skills across the curriculum, particularly in English, but opportunities to develop problem-solving skills are not consistently implemented across the whole school. The school has identified the need to give more depth to the teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics. The

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school has established a number of partnerships and links which enhance pupils' experiences. Out-of-school clubs are supported well; these embrace a wide range of topics from ballroom dancing to drama, as well as a variety of sports.

The care and support for pupils is good. A wide range of links with outside agencies ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other vulnerable groups receive good support which enables them to make appropriate progress in lessons. Pupils joining the school are welcomed and transition into and out of the school is effectively managed to make it as smooth as possible. The quality of care, guidance and support overall enables pupils to achieve good outcomes for most aspects of personal development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school. This is very well focused on improving achievement and accelerating pupils' progress, while maintaining the strengths that make the school a happy and secure place for pupils. Senior leaders have been actively and effectively involved in monitoring and observing lessons, and in examining planning and pupils' work. This has led to rapidly improving teaching. Leaders are very well aware of where weaknesses remain and strategies for addressing these have been planned. The opportunity to work alongside colleagues in the classroom is designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The initiatives taken to date are working well and having a positive impact on pupils' attainment.

The governing body is very supportive of the school and has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. It has ensured that all safeguarding procedures are robust. It monitors this rigorously and regular health and safety checks are carried out taking into account the views of both parents and carers and pupils. Leaders endeavour to ensure that pupils, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, are valued and free from discrimination. They monitor closely the performance of different groups of pupils and ensure, for example, that pupils who join the school speaking little English receive good support in acquiring the language they need. A comprehensive audit has been carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's community cohesion policy and an action plan is fully in place. The pupils have a very good understanding of the range of religious, ethnic and cultural diversity in Britain because of good links with schools in very different parts of the country. The school provides many opportunities for parents and carers to become involved in their children's learning, and initiatives such as the Parents' Focus

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Group are useful and valued. In addition, workshop sessions, in mathematics and literacy, enable parents and carers to get to grips with their children's learning in a practical way.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join Reception with a wide range of attainment, including a significant percentage who are well below the levels expected for their age. Despite making good progress, many join Year 1 still below expected levels, although some children exceed them. Children are eager to learn because teaching is interesting and lively. There is a good balance between those activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. At the early stage of the year when the inspection took place, great emphasis is placed on establishing routines and ensuring that children settle happily in school. Particular attention is paid to developing early social skills. They learn to share, to take turns, and to develop independence and the ability to choose for themselves. Children relish the opportunity to share ideas in the role-play areas. In a session seen during the inspection, children's curiosity was seen developing as they tried to find the 'dinosaur eggs' in the sand. Interesting themes, and the good utilisation of the attractive outside area, make the curriculum and learning relevant and appealing. The care and attention given to children's welfare are good, as are leadership and management. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of young children. Ongoing monitoring of the progress children are making ensures that activities are carefully matched to their needs.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are confident that their children enjoy school, are safe and well cared for. The great majority are happy with the experiences their children are receiving, although a few parents and carers expressed reservations. A very small minority have concerns over whether the school helps their children have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors found during this inspection that pupils had a good understanding of this and were very enthusiastic. A few doubted that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour appropriately. Inspectors are confident that the school tackles this well, involving the assistance and advice of outside agencies where appropriate. A few are concerned that their children do not make enough progress. Inspectors found that the school has done well in the last year, and pupils are now achieving broadly at the expected levels and are making satisfactory progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lughtershall Castle 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.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	66	18	32	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	64	18	32	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	46	26	46	1	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	50	20	36	6	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	57	19	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	45	25	45	2	4	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	32	28	50	7	13	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)	20	36	19	34	6	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	45	24	43	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	32	24	43	10	18	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	36	27	48	3	5	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	50	20	36	4	7	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	50	24	43	1	2	2	2

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



11 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ludgershall Castle Primary School, Ludgershall SP11 9RB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You were really polite and friendly and helped us to learn a lot about what you do and what you enjoy. Your school gives you a satisfactory education and is rapidly improving.

What we found about your school

It is a friendly and happy place in which to work and play.

You enjoy coming to school and behave well.

You achieve the standards you should in English and are doing much better in mathematics, although this is still not quite as good as it should be.

You show a good understanding of how to live healthily and how to stay safe.

Your teachers usually plan interesting lessons and most mark your work well so that you know what you have to do to improve.

You benefit from a good range of after-school clubs as well as some interesting visits and visitors.

Your headteacher and teachers are working very hard to help you do better.

What we have asked your school to do now

You are doing better in mathematics this year, but we have asked the teachers to give you more problems to solve so that you learn how to use the skills and knowledge you have gained.

We have asked the teachers in Years 3 and 4 to make your work a little more exciting and challenging for you so that you make more progress.

We would like the school to make sure you spend enough time on all the different subjects of the curriculum.

We are sure that you will do all you can to help the adults who work with you to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Christine Huard

Lead inspector

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