

# Long Buckby Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121844
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359096
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Angela Kirk

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	99
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cei Davies Linn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Dugdale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	High Street Long Buckby NN6 7RE
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<b>Email address</b>	head@longbuckby-inf.northants-ecl.gov.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The team observed six lessons taught by four teachers, plus a number of shorter visits. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' books, monitoring and assessment information, policies, safeguarding documents and teachers' planning. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from staff as well as 54 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- Inspectors explored the effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress of pupils, especially in mathematics and in language and literacy for Reception Year children.
- They looked at how well teachers challenge all pupils, given the mixed-age classes, and how pupils know what they need to do to achieve well.
- They evaluated how well the curriculum supports the progression of skills across its themes.
- They considered the effectiveness of leaders, including the governing body, at monitoring and evaluating in order to take the right actions to improve the school.

## Information about the school

Long Buckby is a smaller-than-average-sized infant school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Their main needs are related to moderate learning difficulties or to speech and language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. There are currently four classes in the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception/Year 1 classes. There are two Year 1/2 classes.

**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**

**3**

## Main findings

Long Buckby is a satisfactory school. Pupils make satisfactory progress to achieve broadly average attainment by the time they leave the school, although this year the school has improved attainment in writing, as a result of a range of actions to accelerate progress. Attainment in mathematics has been consistently average in recent years and the school is aware that, as a result of its focus on writing, progress in reading and mathematics has not accelerated at the same rate.

Excellent induction arrangements help children in the Reception Year to settle very well into school. Pupils say that they enjoy school and that it is a friendly place. Staff know them well and the caring ethos in the school is reflected in the school's good care, guidance and support for all pupils and particularly for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils behave well and are considerate towards one another, ensuring that lessons are calm and productive. Pupils have a good knowledge about eating a balanced diet and know that activities such as the school's daily 'Activate' sessions and riding their bicycles help them to stay fit.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but improving. A greater proportion of good teaching is evident in the classes for the younger children, but pupils' tracking data, work in books and lesson observations indicate that, although all the teachers in the school have demonstrated instances of good teaching, this is not consistent. When trying to address the needs of all pupils, teachers confuse pupils sometimes by giving them more than one learning outcome with activities that are not matched well to the pupils' needs. That results in slower progress because some pupils do not grasp the main learning intention for the lesson fully. Marking and feedback to pupils in the older classes is improving, but is inconsistent throughout the week and between subjects. As a result, pupils do not always know how to improve their work. Teachers use criteria for success to try to help pupils know what they need to do to achieve well in lessons, but the wording of these is not always useful.

The school has taken effective steps to improve since its last inspection. There has been improvement in communication for language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress in writing has accelerated, resulting in an increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher levels in writing at the end of Year 2. Those developments reflect the school's satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. However, target-setting is only adequately challenging. As a result of the school's self evaluation being over-generous, the school development and subject plans have not focused sufficiently on raising attainment and improving progress. Criteria for the success of actions are sometimes not sufficiently evaluative and the impact of actions is not monitored regularly enough. The governing body challenges the school and is aware that training is required to equip it and the staff to evaluate the school more accurately. It has undertaken some good-quality monitoring

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of the school's work, but governors' visits have not been focused on the key areas of school improvement.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise attainment and improve progress, especially in reading and mathematics, by:
  - improving the quality of teaching and learning so that by July 2012 it is consistently good
  - ensuring that all lessons have appropriate objectives for intended learning and that associated activities are pitched at the at the right level to challenge all pupils
  - ensuring that pupils know exactly what to do to achieve well in each lesson
  - improving the consistency of marking and feedback.
  - Strengthen leadership at all levels in order to accelerate the pace of change and improve the school's overall effectiveness by the time it is next inspected by:
    - agreeing a vision for the school that sets high expectations of achievement and teaching and learning
    - planning a strategy to ensure the expectations will be met, identifying clear milestones against which progress can be measured and establishing a rigorous programme of regular evaluation
    - sharpening the skills of the governing body through training and linking its role more tightly to the school's development plan
    - ensuring leaders and managers are trained to become more directly involved in evaluating teaching and learning and driving improvement in their areas of responsibility.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils join the Reception Year with skills levels in most areas similar to those expected, but they are often below in language for communication and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in recent years has fluctuated, but is broadly average. This year, as a result of specific writing initiatives, most pupils have made good progress in writing. That has resulted in above-average attainment by the end of Year 2 in writing. Initiatives for mathematics have been limited, resulting in satisfactory progress. The school has a range of interventions to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who, as a result, make similar progress to their peers. Pupils make good progress when teachers provide learning activities which encourage independence and, particularly, challenge the more able. For example, in a Year 1/2 mathematics lesson, pupils working independently achieved well in sorting shapes using Carroll diagrams because the teacher had structured the activities to add extra challenge at just the right moment. Care is taken to base lessons on the previous learning of all pupils. Much of the time that is successful, but when learning intentions and

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activities are not matched well to the abilities of different groups, it limits the progress made by some pupils in the lesson.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning. The pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and are confident to talk to the adults at the school if they have a concern or worry. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflected in their understanding of the consequences of their actions and a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about the world around them. The curriculum supports that aspect of their education well. Chinese New Year activities and visits to different places of worship have enabled them to understand about the common values people share.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>3</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: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

A strength of the school is in its care, guidance and support. That is reflected in its good-quality transition, ensuring pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Interventions to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now evaluated and the personalised programmes are beginning to accelerate the pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Attendance is average and the school has identified this as an area for improvement and has introduced a series of measures to improve it, such as reducing the authorisation of term-time holidays. Personal development and well-being are supported effectively, including a weekly, well-attended

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course which explores themes with parents and carers, followed by joint activities with the children, that are enjoyed and appreciated by adults and children alike.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. Enrichment days and exciting activities are planned to inspire pupils. For example, as part of their space theme, Reception Year and Year 1 pupils arrived at school to find an alien spaceship had crashed in their outdoor learning area. The school has recently evaluated the skills progression and put plans in place to improve the progression in the themes for next year.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are some examples of good teaching. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive. Individual targets for Reception Year and Year 2 pupils have been successful in different ways. For Reception Year children, targets help them to know what to improve, supported well by parents and carers; Year 2 pupils are helped to evaluate what they have achieved. However, as Year 2 pupils use their target sheets when they are working, opportunities are missed to use them to improve future work. The school has plans to improve the system of targets for Year 1 pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

School staff and the governing body are motivated highly to improve the school further. Initiatives to improve writing have proved successful and pupils' achievement is starting to rise. Tracking is used to monitor progress in some areas, but the school has not used other methods for checking on the effectiveness of its actions frequently enough, such as lesson observations, planning and work samples and interviews with pupils. As a result, some weaknesses and inconsistencies have not been identified early enough. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. It is well organised and ensures that it meets all statutory obligations, but is aware that it needs to do more to hold the school to account for pupils' achievement. Safeguarding is good and procedures and systems are embedded and followed by all. Many aspects of safeguarding are monitored by the governing body. The school is active in following up any incidents, ensuring that records are amended and policies reviewed if necessary. Engagement with parents and carers is good and their views are taken good account of when making decisions and policies. A more effective approach to analysing data has recently been introduced by the headteacher, giving the school and the governing body pertinent information about the achievement of different groups of pupils, including the achievement of those with special educational needs. There is some improvement where the school has targeted its actions. In this way, the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination

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satisfactorily. The school promotes community cohesion well. Pupils have enjoyed mixing with adults and children from a range of cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds in school and when out on visits and they correspond with pen pals in Africa, resulting in pupils from different backgrounds getting on well together.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Induction arrangements are excellent and include regular 'stay and play' sessions run jointly with nursery providers, home-visits and a range of strategies to help children, parents and carers when children start school. Children are happy and well behaved. The atmosphere is warm and supportive and much appreciated by parents and carers, who benefit from their excellent relationships with the staff. Children have good access to the outdoor environment and activities cover the full range of learning areas. The use of assessment information to inform planning and enable staff to support individuals in their next steps for learning is a particular strength. The teachers are continually tracking children's attainment and adjusting plans to ensure they are all making good progress. As a result of lower attainment in language for communication and literacy at the end of last year, highlighted by the local authority, an action plan was written, which focused on implementing a range of strategies to embed literacy into all areas of the curriculum and encourage children to write independently. Daily phonics sessions (teaching about the sounds that letters make) are set by ability and are fun and enjoyable for children. For example, children achieved well in a phonics lesson, writing sentences in pairs, ensuring that they spelt all the words correctly by sounding out each word and discussing which letters they needed. In another language lesson, children used 'wow words' to describe a place where they might go to hunt a lion, following on from sharing the story, 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. Now, children achieve expected levels in literacy. The school is



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now aware of the need to monitor and analyse its own data in order to identify any areas for improvement at an early stage.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

A higher-than-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Parents and carers are very positive about all aspects of the school; in particular, inspectors received many written comments from parents and carers indicating how pleased they were with the care their children receive and the positive attitudes of all the staff. The school's actions to ensure that pupils are kept safe and enjoy school had unanimous agreement. Almost all of the parents and carers who responded are happy with their children's experience of school overall. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that they were not given sufficient help to support their children's learning. The school offers similar opportunities to other schools, such as information evenings, sending home information about pupils' targets and Reception/Year 1 classes recommending activities that parents and carers might like to undertake to help their children.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Long Buckby Infant 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 99 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	81	10	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	67	18	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	54	22	41	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	57	21	39	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	35	65	18	33	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	69	12	22	4	7	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	63	19	35	1	2	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)	30	56	21	39	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	57	21	39	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	41	30	56	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	54	22	41	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	59	19	35	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	72	14	26	1	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Long Buckby Infant School, Northampton, NN6 7RE**

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit to your school. We were particularly impressed with how friendly you are to each other and by your good behaviour. We were pleased that you follow the rules for healthy living and by how much you know about keeping yourselves safe. You told us that you enjoy school.

We think that your school is satisfactory. That means that some things are going well, but there are some things that could be better. All the adults in the school take good care of you and you say that they listen to you if you have any worries or concerns.

Although a number of you make good progress, some of you only make satisfactory progress because you do not have enough good lessons. In order to improve, we have asked your teachers to make all lessons as good as the best ones, so that you can all make good progress. They will do this by making sure that you know exactly what you are learning and what to do to achieve well in the lesson. We have also asked them to make their marking and feedback better so that you know what you need to improve. We have also asked the headteacher and the governing body to set out clearly what they expect for the school each year. They need to make some improvements in the way they plan for the future and check how well new plans are going. You can all help by continuing to do your best in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Angela Kirk

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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