

Launcelot Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	100692
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	395567
Inspection dates	30–31 May 2012
Lead inspector	Jon Carter

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Calvin Pike
Headteacher	Helen Johnston
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 November 2008
School address	Launcelot Road Downham Bromley BR1 5EA
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jon Carter	Additional Inspector
Gillian Bosschaert	Additional Inspector
Pervina Saunders	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 24 lessons taught by 17 teachers. They listened to pupils read and discussed different aspects of their work with them. Meetings were held with a representative from the interim executive board, members of staff holding leadership responsibilities at the school and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment information, the school's analysis of pupils' progress, curriculum plans and records of the school leaders' lesson monitoring. Inspectors also analysed responses from the 56 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Launcelot is a larger than average primary school. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of a Nursery class, with morning and afternoon sessions, and two Reception classes. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The largest ethnic group in the school is made up of pupils from White British backgrounds. The school has an above average percentage of pupils of minority ethnic heritage. A larger than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is approximately double the national average.

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to staffing, including a new headteacher in September 2010 and the subsequent appointment of a new deputy headteacher. The local authority used its powers of intervention to appoint an interim executive board to replace the governing body in November 2011.

The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because the impact of teachers' marking and feedback on improving pupils' learning is inconsistent across the school and middle leaders do not have full responsibility and accountability for leading teaching and learning in their areas. A decline in performance since the previous inspection has been successfully addressed through changes to leadership and well-targeted staff training.
- Pupils' progress and achievement are good. Rapid progress is being made in reading and mathematics. This is ensuring that pupils are reaching levels of attainment in line with, and sometimes better than, national averages. Over time, progress in writing is less strong, although inspection evidence indicates this is now accelerating and pupils are catching up quickly.
- Teachers make good use of assessment information so that learning activities are well matched to pupils' levels of development. Pupils are engaged and motivated by regular opportunities to work together in small groups. Lessons are often well paced because teachers set realistic but challenging goals and regularly review pupils' learning with them. However, checks are not made consistently on how well pupils use teachers' feedback to improve their work.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils behave responsibly towards one another and are aware of how to keep themselves safe. This ensures that bullying is rare and reported quickly if it occurs.
- Skilful management of teachers' performance by the headteacher has eradicated inadequate teaching and driven swift and concerted improvement. The interim executive board is very effective in supporting and challenging the school's senior leaders. The wider leadership team is increasingly distributed throughout the school. However, subject leaders are at an early stage of identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - teachers' verbal and written feedback is of consistently high quality throughout the school
 - marking in pupils' books always makes the next steps in learning clear and provides pupils with opportunities and time to respond
 - regular checks are carried out to ensure that marking is helping pupils to improve their work.
- Develop the role of middle leaders in leading teaching and learning by:
 - training all middle leaders to accurately and consistently evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - developing a programme of lesson observations for middle leaders which complements and supports current performance management systems
 - using the findings of this programme to evaluate the impact of continued professional development on pupils' learning and to contribute to wider school development planning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school with levels of development which are below age-related expectations. Through the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in their interpersonal, literacy and numeracy skills and become increasingly independent. Their good knowledge of the sounds letters make, known as phonics, is helping their writing skills to improve quickly. This was seen, for example, in Reception where children tried to sound out words to help them write invitations to a Diamond Jubilee party.

Pupils' good progress continues throughout the rest of the school, particularly in reading and mathematics. The appropriate focus previously given to promoting pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in reading is now beginning to accelerate progress in writing, too. For example, in Year 1 pupils were asked to write a story in chronological order and used their knowledge of story structure and time connectives to help them complete the task quickly. As a result, the gap between pupils' attainment in reading and writing is now closing rapidly. Inspection evidence, including scrutiny of pupils' current work and teachers' records of pupils' progress, indicates that pupils are working at broadly average levels, especially by the end of Key Stage 2. There is a similar picture in reading at the end of both key stages, where pupils' attainment is broadly average.

Pupils enjoy frequent opportunities to work collaboratively with others. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 6, more-able pupils gathered their own data in a practical hand-shaking activity while other groups supported each other's learning.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils who speak English as an additional language often make even better progress than their peers because they are appropriately challenged. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because they are well supported in class.

Inspectors agree with the views of the overwhelming majority of parents and carers that their children make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Lesson planning takes good account of teachers' recent and accurate assessment of pupils' achievements. A common approach throughout the school ensures that teachers always make the learning intentions clear for each lesson. Pupils have targets that identify precisely the elements of each subject that they are focusing on, based on accurate evaluations of their skills and understanding. Both of these systems are used effectively to review pupils' learning during lessons and over time.

In the most effective lessons, teachers develop opportunities for pupils to take risks with their learning. In a mathematics lesson for Year 4, for example, high levels of enthusiasm were generated when pupils were asked to investigate one pupil's response to a question about the area of an irregular shape. This enabled the class to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and find out why the response was, in fact, incorrect.

The use of purposeful written feedback that shows pupils clearly how to improve their work is not consistent across the school, particularly in the marking of pupils' work in Key Stage 2. Pupils do not always respond to teachers' written feedback and, where this does occur, the quality of their responses is not rigorously monitored. Consequently the impact of marking on improving pupils' learning is inconsistent.

Teaching ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through regular group activities. Adaptations to the curriculum respond effectively to local circumstances ensuring, for example, that boys are fully engaged by topics that interest them. Learning is often well paced because teachers vary the methods they use frequently and develop pupils' responses well through good quality questioning. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are effectively supported by teaching assistants who ensure that pupils' learning is personalised and appropriate progress is made towards targets. The teaching of reading is effective because of the regular opportunities that pupils have to read at school and the good tracking of the progress they make. Inspectors agree with the overwhelming majority of parents and carers who feel that their children are taught well at this school.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are clear that the school is a safe, happy and caring place to learn. They have positive attitudes to learning because of the strong relationships they have with staff, who ensure that a positive learning environment is established in all classrooms. Pupils work well in groups of mixed gender and ethnic background. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically good. Teachers use their classroom management skills effectively and respond consistently to the few occasions where pupils' behaviour does not meet the school's high expectations. The large majority of parents and carers have positive views of behaviour at school. A few indicated concerns about behaviour in class due to a small number of pupils who experience social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Inspection evidence indicates that there is effective provision for these pupils which ensures that they receive appropriate support from the special educational needs team. As a result, there is very little disruption to learning.

A few parents and carers were also concerned about bullying and racist incidents. Pupils are clear that bullying of any sort is rare and dealt with quickly when reported to school staff. They demonstrate a good understanding of how bullying of all descriptions may occur. Inspection evidence shows that prejudice-based incidents are low and that the school is proactive in promoting pupils' awareness of racism through activities such as 'Show Racism the Red Card' in conjunction with Millwall Football Club.

Pupils' attendance is broadly average following the school's concerted efforts to reduce persistent absence. The appointment of a Family Liaison Officer and strategies that engage pupils, parents and carers have been successful in promoting better attendance and celebrating improved attendance. However, the efforts of the school are occasionally hindered by parents and carers who keep all of their children off school when one is ill. The school is continuing to work with these families to further raise attendance.

Leadership and management

The strategic direction set by the headteacher has ensured that there has been an unwavering focus on successfully reversing a period of decline in pupils' progress and attainment by improving the quality of teaching. Rigorous processes for monitoring have been established to identify the need for robust management action or further training. These have been used well to swiftly address weaknesses through highly personalised professional development activities for teachers and other staff. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved. Pupils are now making accelerated progress and achieving at or beyond the level expected for their age in most subjects. Teachers are highly complimentary about the effectiveness of the support they have been given to improve. There is a strong team ethos and all staff fully understand their role in continued school improvement. The significant and rapid changes that have been made indicate that the school has a strong capacity to improve.

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The interim executive board, established by the local authority, has enabled the headteacher and her senior leadership team to receive expert support and challenge. Board members visit the school regularly to ensure they have an accurate view of the impact of improvements on pupils' learning. They participate in training in preparation for a planned transition to a conventional model of governance in the future.

The distribution of leadership responsibilities throughout the school is becoming well established. A structured programme of training and support has ensured that staff new to the role of subject leadership have developed their skills at an appropriate rate. Nevertheless, the headteacher and her deputy still retain most of the responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Middle leaders have not all been trained in lesson observation and do not currently contribute to the school's programme of monitoring in this way. As a result, some inconsistencies in the quality of provision remain.

School leaders regularly review the curriculum provision to take account of their analyses of pupils' progress. Links between subjects are strong and pupils have regular opportunities to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding to real-life problems within the framework of a broad and balanced curriculum. Good provision is made for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. For example, resources on permanent display in classrooms give in-depth information about the artefacts and celebrations of different religions and pupils are taught about society's responsibility to look after endangered animals.

Leaders and managers throughout the school promote equality and tackle discrimination well by ensuring, for example, that pupils have opportunities to reflect on the diversity of their local community. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including staff recruitment procedures and risk assessment, are managed appropriately.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Launcelot Primary School, Bromley BR1 5EA

Thank you for your warm welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were pleased to speak with some of you about your work and find out your opinions of the school by reading your questionnaires. This letter is to tell you about the findings of the inspection.

These are some of the positive things about the school.

- Launcelot Primary is a good school where pupils make good progress, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers give you work which meets your needs because they know how well you are learning. You learn at a good pace in most lessons because teachers give you realistic but challenging objectives. They also review your learning regularly with you.
- You have positive attitudes to learning and your behaviour in class and around the school is good – well done! You behave responsibly towards one another and know how to keep yourselves safe; you told us there is little bullying.
- The headteacher has made sure that the quality of teaching at the school is improving quickly.

We have asked the headteacher to do two things.

- Make sure that teachers always make the next steps clear when they mark your work.
- Ensure teachers who are responsible for different subjects regularly check how good teaching and learning are in lessons.

You can help by reading your teachers' feedback carefully and taking time to respond to their questions to show that you understand the next steps to take.

Yours sincerely

Jon Carter
Lead inspector

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