



Longwick C of E Combined School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110432
Local Authority Buckinghamshire
Inspection number 278432
Inspection date 13 November 2006
Reporting inspector Vanessa Ward

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Walnut Tree Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Longwick
Age range of pupils	4-11		Princes Risborough HP27 9SJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01844 344769
Number on roll (school)	202	Fax number	01844 273642
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Simon Appleby
		Headteacher	Mrs Christine Sharples
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2000		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Longwick CE Primary School is slightly smaller than average. Most of the pupils are White British. Other pupils have a range of minority ethnic heritages. The pupils come from a mix of social backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, is below average. Fewer pupils than are usually found are entitled to free school meals. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for 10 weeks.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Longwick Church of England Primary School is a good school that provides a good quality of education. The personal development and well-being of the pupils is outstanding. They greatly enjoy being in school and say that 'the teachers make learning fun'. Parents share their positive views, commenting that 'the school has been wonderful for our children'.

The pupils behave extremely well and show very positive attitudes to learning. Through participation in a wide range of sporting activities and daily opportunities to eat healthily, the pupils gain excellent knowledge about healthy lifestyles. Their comprehensive understanding of how to keep safe is constantly increasing through the school's conscientious guidance, and via the very effective procedures for managing behaviour. The school's intensive focus on teaching basic skills and giving pupils meaningful opportunities, such as taking responsibility for organising fund raising, helps them to prepare very well for life beyond school.

In the few weeks since the headteacher was appointed, she has established a strong sense of teamwork among staff and governors. Her vision as to how to move the school forward is shared well. All levels of management work effectively together to promote school improvement. However, the considerable expertise of the subject leaders is not used sufficiently to enable them to fully influence standards, teaching and learning throughout the school.

Good teaching and a stimulating curriculum make learning interesting for the pupils and promote their good achievement. The school successfully promotes both the pupils' academic development and their well-being through good links with other agencies. Pupils' personal development is enriched by a strong focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The very positive relationships within the school help pupils to feel very secure. They accept responsibilities very readily and greatly value the opportunities they are given to influence school development.

The effective provision in the Foundation Stage gives the children a good start to their learning. Pupils continue to make good progress through Years 1 to 6, so that by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The school is vigilant in monitoring standards and takes action to bring about improvement. A recent focus on increasing the range of descriptive vocabulary used by pupils has begun to raise standards in writing.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the roles of the subject leaders to increase their influence over standards, teaching and learning in their subjects throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils' achievement is good. The children enter the school with skills that are typical of those found in most four-year-olds. The good provision in the Foundation Stage enables them to make good progress. By the end of the Reception year, most children reach the expected goals in most areas of learning. The good teaching from Years 1 to 6 builds on this good start and pupils continue to make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The school identifies where standards could be higher and takes action. A recent focus to raise standards in mathematics is successfully improving pupils' abilities to solve mathematical problems, and the school recognises that there is more to be done in this area. Analysis of data indicates that all groups of pupils make good progress, but the school is not complacent, and staff are currently working to improve further the progress made by more able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils respond very positively to the school's excellent promotion of healthy eating. They enjoy eating fruit and vegetables and gain a comprehensive understanding of healthy lifestyles. They take part very enthusiastically in the many opportunities the school provides to enjoy sport and take exercise. The school council is very effective and has been instrumental in increasing the range of equipment available for both outdoor and indoor play. Participation in a wide range of events such as interviewing potential new headteachers and involvement in a mini enterprise scheme help them develop outstanding skills for life beyond school. Pupils' attendance is average but most absence is caused by unavoidable illness. They feel very safe and secure in school. They follow instructions very carefully so that they play safely on the adventure playground and climbing wall. They are very confident that any bullying will be quickly resolved. One child commented that, 'we can go to any adult and they will sort out our problems'. Pupils contribute significantly to the community through a range of events, including festivals and carol singing.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They care for and value each other. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and appreciate the opportunities they are given to discuss issues in class. The range of visits and of visitors to the school provides pupils with a good understanding of different cultures and traditions, and the school is increasing these opportunities. Pupils' social skills develop very well through paired and team work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good quality of teaching and learning enables the pupils to make good progress. Very good adult-pupil relationships boost pupils' confidence and promote self-esteem. Discussion in pairs, for example, to check the teacher's answers to addition sums, successfully encouraged discussion about the calculations and enhanced social development in Year 6. Pupils know that, 'if we ask a question, the teachers always help us'. This makes them into confident learners and contributes to their good progress.

Teachers usually share the purpose of the lesson with their pupils, and this helps them to know what they are expected to learn and to reflect on their progress at the end of the lesson. Support staff work well with small groups of pupils, particularly assisting those with learning difficulties and disabilities. As part of the drive to improve teaching, the school is increasing teachers' understanding of different learning styles and they are beginning to incorporate these into their teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is enhanced very effectively by a good range of enrichment activities which improve pupils' academic, personal and social development. Pupils speak enthusiastically about special events, such as 'maths week and science week'. Adjustments to the curriculum enable pupils of all abilities to participate fully. The school is currently revising its curriculum to make it more creative and exciting. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum provides a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. This sustains the children's interest and contributes to their good progress. The school places a strong focus on teaching the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) across different subjects, and is continuing to develop this practice. Pupils speak very enthusiastically about the wide range of clubs that are provided, and uptake is high. This provision does much to encourage pupils both to take exercise and to develop very positive attitudes to school life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school establishes an environment in which pupils feel greatly valued. Parents affirm this overwhelmingly, saying that they are 'extremely happy with the level of care at the school and;hellip;our children come home very happy, eager to talk about their day'. Liaison with outside agencies is used successfully to support the well-being and development of all of the pupils, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities in particular. Systems for behaviour management are well understood by pupils and are very effective. All aspects

of health and safety are successfully promoted and monitored. Academic guidance is good. The school sets targets for pupils, and involves them successfully in reviewing their progress. It is currently revising its tracking system to make it more comprehensive and to sharpen its analysis of pupils' progress, to allow more targeted intervention to support pupils who are underperforming. Support for pupils when they join the school, and when they prepare to move on to the next stage, is comprehensive and well considered.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good and contribute significantly to the good progress made by the pupils. The new headteacher is supported very well by the staff and governors. She has a clear vision of how to improve the school and recognises that there are opportunities to use the many talents among the staff to build on existing success and bring about new improvements. This is particularly the case for the subject leaders whose potential to contribute to improvement is not used fully at present. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide the headteacher with a good balance of support and challenge.

The school's process for evaluating its strengths and weaknesses, and in planning for school improvement, is comprehensive. This process successfully involves the staff and governors, and seeks and values the views of parents and pupils.

Successful initiatives, such as promoting healthy eating, improving provision for ICT, and raising standards in writing, have contributed to recent school improvement. These outcomes, combined with the good progress made with the key issues from the previous inspection, indicate that the school has good capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making me feel welcome when I visited Longwick recently, and for talking to me about your school. I enjoyed listening to your comments.

Your parents and carers think that your school is a good place to be and I agree with them. You learn well and enjoy the interesting things that your teachers give you to do. You told me that you feel safe in school and that the adults will help you if you have any problems.

You eat lots of fruit and vegetables in school and are involved in many sports, and these things help you to stay healthy. You behave extremely well and show that you care for each other, and this helps to make your school a happy place. I am pleased that you enjoy sharing your ideas for making your school better through your school council. I could see that you really enjoy using the play equipment that the school council organised for you.

Your teachers already help each other to teach the different subjects well and I have asked them to do more of this. Your headteacher, teachers and the governors are all good at finding ways to improve your school. I know that you will help them as much as you can.

I hope that you will carry on enjoying school and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Vanessa Ward

Lead Inspector