



# Leek First School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124098  
**LEA** Staffordshire  
**Inspection number** 281632  
**Inspection dates** 23 May 2006 to 24 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Chris Kessell AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	First	<b>School address</b>	East Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Leek
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 9		Staffordshire ST13 6LF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01538 483200
<b>Number on roll</b>	185	<b>Fax number</b>	01538 483200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 September 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Deane

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23 May 2006 - 24 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 281632
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is below average in size. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Children join Reception with levels of attainment that are below those found nationally.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's view that it provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and satisfactory value for money. Parents like the school and are very supportive. The pupils' personal development is good. They are well behaved and particularly friendly and polite to visitors.

Satisfactory provision in Reception enables children to make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points, although the standards they reach when they move to Year 1 are slightly below those expected for their age. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. On occasions, teaching is good, enabling pupils to make more rapid progress. In Year 2 for example, pupils reach broadly average standards, as a result of effective teaching. At times, teachers' expectations are not high enough and lessons lack sufficient pace. The school carries out regular assessments of its pupils but this information is not used rigorously enough to ensure that all pupils are making the progress they should.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has introduced sound initiatives, such as support programmes in literacy and numeracy, to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement. However, it is difficult to monitor their impact because targets for measuring improvement are unclear and lack precision. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are too informal and governors have not ensured that teachers are appraised through performance management. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school has the capacity to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Formalise procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and focus lesson observations on teachers' expectations and the pace of lessons.
- Ensure that the assessment information gathered by the school on individual pupils is used effectively to track pupils' progress towards challenging targets.
- Set clearer targets for school improvement and link these to the performance management of teachers.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Children join the school with levels of attainment that are lower than those normally found, especially in communication and language. During Reception, children make satisfactory progress, although by the time they join Year 1 standards are still slightly below the levels expected. The children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

Most pupils continue to make satisfactory progress overall through Years 1 to 4. A small minority of pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because their progress is not monitored effectively. Higher attaining pupils' progress is

sometimes slowed because they are not always challenged. Progress quickens with better teaching and learning, for example, in Year 2. Standards in Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, the majority of them reach the levels expected for their age. As pupils are not set challenging individual targets, the school's focus on improving pupils' achievement is not as rigorous as it could be. Satisfactory support for pupils with learning difficulties enables them to make the same satisfactory progress as their peers.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils are keen to learn, well mannered and behave well in lessons and around the school. Attendance is satisfactory. In discussion, pupils say they enjoy school. They are encouraged in various ways to lead healthy lifestyles, for example through the good provision for physical education and the school's policy on promoting the eating of healthy snacks. Pupils learn how to stay safe through lessons and talks from visitors, such as those with the Staffordshire Life Skills Caravan.

Pupils make a good contribution to the school community. They are happy to take on classroom responsibilities. Older children have a say in school improvement through their involvement in the 'Time to Care Committee', which is working to improve the school environment. The pupils are happy that they are listened to and believe that their views are taken seriously. Plans are in place to introduce a school council. The pupils are involved in the wider community, supporting local and national charities. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are satisfactorily promoted and pupils are adequately prepared for the next stages of their education and involvement in the wider world.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and, as a result, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The pupils are enthusiastic learners. They listen attentively and enjoy lessons. Teachers try to ensure that pupils are given work that is set at the right level, particularly in English and mathematics. However, there are times when teachers do not have high enough expectations of their pupils and the pace of lessons is too leisurely. This prevents pupils from making the progress they are capable of, particularly higher attainers.

The quality of the teachers' marking is varied. It can be informative and supportive, enabling pupils to move on in their learning. On other occasions, it is less helpful and pupils receive very little benefit. The group targets pupils have in literacy and numeracy

are supporting pupils' learning, although it is too early to judge their overall impact as this is a new initiative. Teaching assistants provide adequate support in classes. Although the majority of pupils have a clear understanding of the work they are undertaking, there are not enough opportunities for them to identify how well they are doing. The school is addressing this through the new 'Building Learning Power' programme which supports pupils' self-assessment of their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and ensures that most pupils build on what they have learnt previously. It is adapted adequately to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. There is satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The curriculum provides well for the pupils' personal, social and health education and much of the pupils' good personal development is a result of this. Provision for physical education is also good.

The curriculum is enhanced well by various activities. Pupils are able to participate in a number of popular lunchtime and after-school clubs and activities that they enjoy. The current interest in solving Su Doku puzzles is promoted at a club run by the pupils themselves. Visits and visitors successfully support the work of the school. The Year 4 residential visit to Standon Bowers Outdoor Education Centre was particularly successful in providing pupils with an opportunity to experience exciting activities, such as rock climbing and caving.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory level of care, guidance and support. Procedures for ensuring child protection and for promoting health and safety are in place. Pupils know that staff take their concerns seriously. They say that there is very little bullying or other aggressive behaviour and are confident that any instances that do happen are firmly and effectively dealt with. Pupils are effectively encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles and to stay safe. The learning needs of pupils with learning difficulties are carefully worked out and adequate individual education plans are drawn up to help them make satisfactory progress. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is inconsistent and not rigorous enough. Consequently, pupils who are not making sufficient progress are not always identified quickly enough.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has effectively assessed the school's strengths and weaknesses and has a clear vision of the way forward. The school's improvement plan reflects this assessment and identifies what the school needs to do to improve further. However, some of its targets, for example, those for improving standards, are not precise enough. In recent years, the headteacher and

governors have been particularly successful in making significant improvements to the school buildings and environment. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and are satisfactorily involved in planning and evaluation. The school actively seeks the views of parents and pupils through questionnaires, and acts on their views where possible.

Performance management is at an early stage. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are beginning to be developed, and there are examples of how this has been useful, for example, in improving the quality of teachers' questioning in mathematics. However, although some subject co-ordinators look at work that pupils have done, procedures for formally assessing the quality of teaching and learning for the purpose of improvement are yet to be introduced. The school has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection and the school has the capacity to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

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

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Many of you will remember that we visited your school recently. Thank you for welcoming us and being so polite and friendly when we visited lessons or chatted to you. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

What your school does well

You feel safe and happy and get on well with each other and the members of staff.

PE lessons are good and help you become fit and healthy.

You listen well in lessons and are keen to learn.

There are plenty of clubs and activities that you can enjoy at lunchtime or after school.

What we have asked your school to do now

Provide time for teachers to watch each other teach.

Keep a careful eye on the progress that everyone makes so that you are all able to do as well as you can.

Plan carefully how the school is going to improve in the future and draw up some targets to help improvement.

Best wishes to all of you at Leek First School.