



Ludgershall Castle Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126489
LEA Wiltshire
Inspection number 282122
Inspection dates 10 May 2006 to 11 May 2006
Reporting inspector Garth Muton AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Short Street
School category	Foundation		Ludgershall
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Andover, Hampshire SP11 9RB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01264 790375
Number on roll	284	Fax number	01264 791329
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Karen Vaughn
Date of previous inspection	27 May 2002	Headteacher	Mr Andy Bridewell

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	10 May 2006 - 11 May 2006	282122

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ludgershall Castle is a larger than average primary school. It draws its pupils from a mix of local authority and private housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. A very small percentage of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. One pupil has English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils' attainment when they begin school is average. The school was removed from special measures in November 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The inspectors confirm the school's own view that its effectiveness is unsatisfactory. There are too many weaknesses and the school gives unsatisfactory value for money. Weaknesses in leadership and management and low expectations have meant that too many pupils have not achieved as well as could be expected. Standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science have been low for too long.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Reception but in other years progress is inconsistent because the quality of teaching is not good enough. Whilst there are signs of some improvements in teaching, there is too much that is inadequate and pupils do not get enough good teaching to sustain the rate of progress needed if they are to catch up. Systems for assessing pupils and tracking their progress are inadequate. A culture of low expectations has only recently begun to change. The quality of provision in Reception is satisfactory. In Years 1 to 6, the unsatisfactory organisation of classes and a curriculum that does not meet pupils' needs undermine the headteacher's drive for improved achievement. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is satisfactory and they respond well when the teaching engages them. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. Parents are supportive of the school and generally pleased with their children's progress.

The school has not sustained the progress it made whilst it was previously in special measures. The issues raised at the time of the last inspection have not been resolved and remain as key priorities. The new headteacher has brought new commitment and drive, has instilled these in others, and has both the vision and skills to bring about improvement. Support has been targeted to improve teaching but there are too many staff not demonstrating the capability to improve quickly enough. There are weaknesses in the leadership and management skills of key personnel in the senior management. Overall the school's capacity to improve is inadequate.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate improvements to the quality of teaching so that all pupils achieve better and make consistently good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve assessment and establish tracking of pupils' achievements to make sure that teachers have the information to plan work at the right level.
- Strengthen the leadership and management skills of the senior team to increase the capacity for improvement.
- Raise the level of pupils' attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Weaknesses in provision result in below average standards and inadequate achievement. Apart from small variations, standards have not improved over the past five years. Pupils' attainment when they start school varies slightly from year to year but is about average. Pupils' progress including those with learning disabilities and difficulties is inconsistent throughout their time in school and inadequate overall. In 2005, teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 showed standards below average. National test results in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 revealed the school to be in the lowest performing 10% of schools nationally.

Pupils make a satisfactory start in Reception. However in Years 1 to 6 there are variations in achievement both between classes and within year groups. These disparities spring from inconsistent teaching and the unsatisfactory organisation of classes. There are examples of pupils making satisfactory progress and a few do even better. However, too many are working at levels below expectations and have too much catching up to do.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The pupils enjoy school and they can give examples of lessons, activities and after school clubs that give them pleasure. In the playground, they cooperate well and are generally caring and supportive. In lessons, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory and they respond enthusiastically if teaching is interactive and engaging. They have a keen sense of fair play and they are given sufficient opportunities to reflect on their inner thoughts and feelings. However, their progress in acquiring basic skills is not good enough to prepare them for their future lives. They are sympathetic to cultures other than their own. Pupils are knowledgeable about safe and healthy living and demonstrate this through their choice of food and playtime activities. They have confidence in the action that teachers take when incidents of bullying arise. Attendance is carefully monitored and a range of strategies has resulted in a gradual improvement but it remains unsatisfactory. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the school community. They monitor playground behaviour and members of the elected school council discuss matters of genuine interest and importance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching is unsatisfactory because pupils make inadequate progress. In Reception, generally sound teaching results in the pupils progressing satisfactorily. In Years 1 to

6, in the few lessons where teaching is good, the rapid pace and lively content engages pupils and they make good progress. In unsatisfactory lessons, the pace is too slow and the content is not matched to the learners' needs. Despite considerable support and guidance given to some teachers, the quality of their lessons fluctuates between satisfactory and inadequate. The persistent element of unsatisfactory teaching is gradually reducing but is taking too long to eliminate. The proportion of good teaching is too small to enable pupils to make the progress that they should. The implementation of agreed procedures for improvement is too slow and inconsistent. However, classroom assistants are beginning to make a more effective contribution to pupils' learning. In some mixed-age classes, the teaching does not reflect the needs of the different year groups. Teachers' planning is often not based upon pupils' previous learning. This is because assessment is inadequate and the teachers often do not use the systems that are in place. The school also lacks a system for tracking pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum is unsatisfactory. In Reception all the required six areas of learning are covered. In Years 1 to 6 the work in literacy and numeracy is based on national strategies but it is not matched to pupils' specific needs. An ambitious project to revise the remainder of the curriculum is at an early stage of development. However, at present the curriculum lacks continuity and does not yet meet the needs of pupils. French has been added to the curriculum but there is too little use of information and communication technology throughout the school.

Additional enrichment activities include clubs for music, drama and sporting activities, and older pupils are able to take advantage of annual residential trips to France.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The level of care is good but there are some weaknesses in guidance and support for pupils. Pupils are well looked after, health and safety routines are in place and risk assessments are carried out. Child protection procedures have been reviewed and are all in place. The monitoring of pupils' progress, including that of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, is not rigorous enough to ensure that the pupils achieve well enough. New systems are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. The most effective of these are termly 'pupil progress meetings', when teachers meet senior staff to review all pupils. The guidance and support given to pupils after these meetings are variable. Specific targets of things pupils 'must, should or could' learn have become more relevant to pupils' needs but the effective use of these targets to boost pupils' achievement is inconsistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Weaknesses in provision and performance are the result of inadequate leadership and management. The improvements achieved when the school was previously in special measures have not been sustained. Low expectations have been endemic throughout the school community, including the governing body. Leaders and managers have not been able to establish a consistent drive for achievement.

The new headteacher has made a good start in improving expectations and commitment. Key personnel, including some long-standing senior managers, are responding well to his leadership. Nevertheless, the senior management team remains at a developmental stage and requires strengthening before it can contribute more effectively to the school's capacity to improve. The headteacher has made an accurate assessment of the school's weaknesses and has taken action to tackle them, responding well to external support and advice and developing his own skills rapidly. However, the sheer scale and all pervading nature of weaknesses in provision has meant that progress in some important areas has been limited. The headteacher has worked well with governors and they are now just beginning to be more rigorous in their monitoring of the school's performance. There is a robust system for monitoring the quality of teaching and supporting less effective teachers. The introduction of 'pupil progress' meetings is another sign of improvement. However, the lack of consistency in the implementation of new initiatives means that the overall pace of improvement is too slow.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	4	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	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	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	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	No
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

I am writing to let you know how much all the inspectors enjoyed visiting your school. You were very polite to us and helpful. Many of you were busy taking your tests and I am sure you tried your very hardest to do well.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors were very helpful to us as well. It was a very busy week for them but they did all they could to help us find out about your school.

Here are a few of the most important things we want you to know:

- Your behaviour is satisfactory. That means that your behaviour is acceptable most of the time but you can do even better if you try.
- The grown-ups in your school take care of you and you feel safe. You trust the adults to sort out any worries that you have.
- You know what you have to do to stay healthy and you act sensibly when you do things that might be dangerous, such as when you use the gardening tools.
- You like your teachers and enjoy your lessons. Older children really enjoy the after-school clubs and the trip to France.
- Too many of you have days off school too often.

Here are some improvements we would like to see:

- We think your teachers need to help you progress more rapidly especially in reading, writing and maths. Some of the other subjects have to be organised better and we would like to see you using computers more often.
- Your headteacher, Mr Bridewell, is a very busy man and he wants you to do really well. He needs more people to help him.
- One of the other things the school needs is a computer system to keep information on your progress so that teachers know just how well every one of you is doing, so that they can be sure that you do as well as you can.

Thank you again. It was a delight to meet you all.