



Linton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112978
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289480
Inspection dates 16–17 November 2006
Reporting inspector Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Street
School category	Foundation		Linton, Swadlincote
Age range of pupils	4–11		Derbyshire DE12 6QA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01283760382
Number on roll (school)	260	Fax number	01283760382
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Nick Hales
		Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Cottle
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a slightly larger than average sized school serving an area on the edge of southern Derbyshire. Slightly fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average. All pupils are from a White British background. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the expected time is above average. In 2001 the school was identified as having serious weaknesses and in 2003 was placed in 'special measures'. In 2004 the school was taken out of special measures. In 2005 the school achieved ECO status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark was awarded in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The inspection findings confirm the school's own assessment that its effectiveness is satisfactory and improving. The school was taken out of special measures in 2004. The present headteacher has been pivotal in overcoming initial resistance to change and guiding the school towards further improvement. This, with more recent staff changes and what has already been achieved by the senior leadership team, means that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. However, there is still more work to be done.

When pupils enter Nursery they have the skills expected for their age. Pupils make good overall progress in the Foundation Stage. They achieve the targets expected by the end of Reception and occasionally exceed these because the quality of provision is good. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have not always been high enough. Inspection findings are that they are improving and are now close to national averages. The majority of pupils attain the average level for their age, but fewer reach the higher levels, especially in mathematics. The school has put in place several projects to help raise standards but these are at too early a stage to have made a significant impact on standards in all year groups. Overall pupils achieve satisfactorily although, because of their previously slow progress, some of the more capable pupils could achieve more.

Pupil's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy school and are learning how to lead safe and healthy lives. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and there is some particularly effective teaching in Nursery and for the oldest pupils. But, as yet, the quality of teaching is inconsistent and in lower Key Stage 2 is not always effective enough. The school has worked hard to improve planning and now activities provide a suitable level of challenge for groups of pupils of different ability. This is starting to make an impact on standards. The curriculum is satisfactory and the school is working hard to develop links between subjects to make learning more interesting. The quality of care and guidance is good and pupils are well supported both personally and in their class work.

Leadership and management of the school, including governance, are satisfactory overall. The head provides good leadership but the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school lack some rigour in identifying what remains to be done. Senior staff have recognised that there is more to do to make sure improvement is consistent in all areas and they have the skills and determination to succeed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by ensuring all pupils and particularly those of higher ability achieve all they can, especially in mathematics.
- Ensure the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school.
- Extend the opportunities to rigorously monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of education provided.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter the school with skills and knowledge that are generally average for their age. However, some are very quiet and their ability to communicate with others is initially limited. Pupils do particularly well in Nursery where the activities are both challenging and fun, so that one parent notes 'I wouldn't send my children to any other nursery'. They make good overall progress in the Foundation Stage.

National test and assessment results in Years 2 and 6 show standards have gone up and down in recent years and pupils' achievement has not been consistent. School records show some pupils have not made enough progress from year to year. In recent times staff at the end of both key stages, and particularly in Year 6, have had to work hard to plug the gaps in pupils' learning. Current standards in Year 6 are much better and these pupils are on course to meet the school's targets, indicating the success of recent improvements. Inspection findings are that standards are average in both Years 2 and 6. While most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve satisfactorily, some higher attaining pupils could achieve more in reading and writing and particularly in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is average. Most pupils behave well in lessons and in the playground. They enjoy their time in school especially when they recognise that their work is improving. They find most lessons interesting and pupils particularly enjoy practical activities. In learning how to lead healthy lifestyles, pupils make wise choices at lunchtime and join in physical activities enthusiastically. They say they feel safe in school. They are increasingly involved in the school and wider community through the provision for arts and sport and they support charities through fundraising. The school has worked successfully to improve opportunities for cultural and spiritual development since the previous inspection and these now have a good impact on learning. The pupils have good social skills which support their future education and later lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement that teaching and learning are satisfactory, although its quality ranges widely, from inadequate to outstanding. Excellent teaching in the nursery enables children to get a flying start and outstanding teaching in Year 6 ensures the oldest pupils are now doing well. However, the differences in the quality of teaching throughout the rest of the school mean that pupils make uneven progress from year to year. Teachers take account of pupils'

capabilities when they organise them into groups. However, progress slows when they give pupils work that is too hard or too easy, for example in mathematics. Staff use information and communication technology (ICT) skills well to inform and engage pupils, and the pace of lessons is sometimes brisk. Effective management of pupils generally results in good behaviour. However, as with other positive features, this is not typical of all teaching and occasionally some weak organisation and ineffective management slow progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs of learners. There is satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT. The school's drive to give pupils more practical learning experiences is making learning in some classes more engaging. The school recognises the scope for developing its satisfactory use of visits to places of interest and visitors to school to enhance learning further. It is also aware that the lack of easy access to outdoor space limits the curriculum for Reception children. The school has been forward looking in introducing French for all pupils. A wide range of after-school clubs effectively involves younger pupils as well as older ones.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care of pupils is good. Support for those with learning difficulties is effective and there are good partnerships with specialists who help staff assess and plan for the needs of such pupils. Parents recognise the school cares for and supports their children well. There are good procedures for child protection and the checks on adults who work or help in school are completed fully. The school has developed effective links with other organisations such as local secondary schools and sports clubs to support those who are recognised as gifted and talented, although the help within school for these pupils is not as effective. Opportunities are missed at lunchtime to guide pupils in developing the social skills to equip them for later life. Pupils' academic progress is monitored and reviewed regularly and effectively in English and mathematics and pupils are clear about their targets for improvement in these important subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. Self-evaluation has improved and provides a sound analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. When the school was taken out of special measures, the new headteacher was quick to recognise what needed to be done to bring about sustained improvement. With the support of the local authority, a programme of improvement was put in place and many changes were made. However, there was a lot of work still to be done and, because teaching had not been consistently challenging enough, the rate of

improvement was slower than anticipated. The headteacher has played a key role in managing and pursuing with determination the many necessary changes and winning over staff and parents to gain their support. With recent changes in staff, including the formation of an enthusiastic and capable senior leadership team, there is a renewed approach to improving provision and clear signs that standards are rising.

The school has a satisfactory programme to monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of teaching and learning across the school. This has been very useful in identifying strengths and weaknesses. However, the programme does not yet involve subject leaders or governors well enough to bring about change even more quickly.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

18 November 2006

Dear Children

Linton Primary School, Linton, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE12 6QA

Thank you very much for looking after us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed speaking to you in lessons, at lunchtime, in the playground and at our meeting with some of the older pupils. We were very pleased to hear that you like your school and enjoy your time there. We think your school has improved in the last two years.

These are the things that we found are best about your school:

- The headteacher does a good job and is helping the school to improve in lots of ways
- Your behaviour is good and you get on well together
- The teachers make school life enjoyable.

This is what we think could be improved:

- Many of you, and particularly those of you who find learning quite easy, could make even more progress, especially in mathematics
- We want the teachers to make sure your lessons are all as good as the best, with suitable and interesting work for you all
- Teachers and governors should look at lessons and your work more to find out what else needs improving.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly towards us. We hope in the future you keep thinking carefully about what you eat and having lots of exercise so that you are fit and healthy. Remember that you can do a lot to help your school improve even more by making sure you come to school regularly and trying really hard all the time.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector