



Leeds and Broomfield Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 118623
Local Authority Kent
Inspection number 291192
Inspection date 28 September 2006
Reporting inspector Liz Kounnou

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lower Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Leeds
Age range of pupils	4-11		Maidstone ME17 1RL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01622 861398
Number on roll (school)	78	Fax number	01622 863637
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Brenda Rennie
		Headteacher	Stephen McGill
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school with just three mixed age classes. The school is situated in an area of economic advantage. More children join the school at times other than the start of the school year than is typical. Attainment when children start school is broadly in line with expectations. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is a little higher than average. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, although all pupils are fluent English speakers. There has been a high turnover of staff in the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that has begun to improve recently. However, the pace of improvement has been slowed by repeated staff changes. Parents' views of the school are mostly positive; 'Every child does count at Leeds and Broomfield' one wrote. The few concerns parents raise are mainly about standards. In most years since the last inspection, standards have been broadly average and pupils made satisfactory progress. There has been an improvement in the rate of pupils' progress since the spring of 2006. Pupils in Year 6 make steady and occasionally good progress in English and science lessons, making up some lost ground, so that they achieve satisfactorily. In mathematics, too many capable pupils do not reach the standards that they should because lessons are not always sufficiently challenging. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness reflects school leaders' aspirations for the school and does not paint an accurate picture of how effective the school is currently. School leaders know what works well and what needs to improve but the pace of improvement needs to be driven faster through better use of the new assessment systems. These make clear exactly what each pupil needs to learn next in English and mathematics. At the moment the system is more rigorously applied in Years 3 to 6 and is making more impact than in Years 1 and 2. However, pupils throughout the school are not sufficiently familiar with their targets, so they do not know how to improve their work. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory, the school is not making enough use of assessment information to ensure that work set in lessons helps all pupils to reach their targets. The quality of education for children in the Reception Year is satisfactory, and Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, working with the reception group, also make satisfactory progress. At present the system for checking how well children are doing in their first few years at school does not provide school leaders with enough information to ensure that all make the best progress possible. The calm and friendly atmosphere created in the school by all the staff contributes well to pupils' good behaviour. The high priority placed on developing pupils' understanding of how to be healthy and safe reflects the strong pastoral care for all pupils. Older pupils develop personal responsibility well, because the school listens to and acts on their ideas. New developments in the curriculum are designed to add more enjoyment to pupils' work throughout the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment information to ensure that all pupils work at suitably challenging activities in all lessons, especially mathematics.
- Give pupils clearer guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.
- Make better use of the new assessment procedures to increase the rate of school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Over the past few years pupils' achievement throughout the school has been satisfactory and pupils attain broadly average standards. However, a fall in both standards and levels of achievement in Years 5 and 6 in 2005 prompted school leaders to make effective changes to the school's assessment procedures. The result is that current standards are once again close to the average. The improved standards reflect a particularly good improvement in writing. However, in mathematics, the most able pupils do not reach their potential because they are not sufficiently challenged or stretched in lessons. Children in the reception group make satisfactory progress because the school is careful to ensure that the activities they take part in throughout the day are appropriate for their age and ability. This is built on in Years 1 and 2 where pupils continue to make steady progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. However, pupils' enjoyment of school, their behaviour and social development are good, and pupils know well how to stay safe and look after themselves. The majority of parents agree that their children enjoy school and are keen to join in all activities. One wrote 'the teachers at this school give my child the confidence to learn in a happy, fun atmosphere'. Their above average attendance reflects this. Pupils particularly like way that links are made between subjects and the fact that they learn about 'topics'. All around the school pupils are polite and behave well. Playtimes are happy, with pupils of all ages playing together energetically and safely. Older pupils show good social skills and are proud of their responsibilities around the school, for instance, in the 'Tidy Team'. A number of changes are taking place this year to improve pupils' personal development that have yet to make an impact. At present, the school council is drawn only from Years 5 and 6 and the school knows this is a weakness. Council members said 'We wanted all classes to be represented', and this is in the process of being addressed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Satisfactory teaching and learning help to ensure that the children make steady progress. Teachers are especially good at creating a calm atmosphere in school so that pupils behave well and pay attention in lessons. They value pupils' contributions and display their work with care, creating bright and well ordered classrooms that are a pleasure to work in. In lessons from Year 3 to Year 6 teachers make clear to pupils exactly 'what we are learning today', and this helps pupils to review their learning

when they have finished. Teaching assistants are appropriately deployed to support pupils who struggle with some aspects of work. However, the work provided for pupils is not consistently well matched to their needs and this particularly hinders the progress of the more capable pupils. Regular assessments of pupils' achievements take place. Currently, the assessment information is not used carefully enough to match work to different pupils and to make sure everyone is working towards his or her targets. Often, for example, the most able pupils are asked to complete more work, rather than more challenging work that will build on the skills they already have. This is most marked in mathematics. Teachers mark pupils' work frequently, but the comments they make do not spell out for each child why their work is good and what would make it even better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Although the curriculum meets most pupils' needs there are weaknesses that are hindering the rate of progress. The school identified that the level of challenge for pupils of all abilities is too low, particularly in mathematics, and is working to improve planning so that all pupils make more progress as they move through the school. Special days or weeks are used well to boost interest and provide a more active approach to learning. For example, during science week children were set challenges through practical investigations. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) work has improved since the last inspection, with a good impact on standards. The school is also embarking on extensive plans to enliven the curriculum and create stimulating links between subjects. Pupils take part in a good range of clubs and other activities, including French. Sport is well represented and popular with boys and girls of all ages.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and the caring family atmosphere is a strength of the school. One parent wrote, 'This is a very happy school' and another, 'The support given by staff to pupils is second to none.' Strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils having difficulties in a lesson are quickly spotted and given extra help. The school has begun to monitor pupils' personal development and well-being in detail, providing school leaders with clear information to plan further improvements. At present the guidance and support for learning that pupils receive is not strong enough. As a result, they are not clear how to improve their work. The new system for setting targets has the potential to make a significant difference, but is not used consistently to help pupils of all ages and abilities make more progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides clear direction and knows what needs to be improved. Actions already taken have brought about some improvement in standards in 2006 and demonstrate the school's capacity to improve further. The high proportion of recent staff changes has slowed the use of new assessment procedures. The headteacher has tackled this well by setting up half termly meetings that will review the progress of all pupils in each class and set challenging targets for each pupil to achieve. Leadership and management roles have been reviewed following recent staff changes. Work is taking place to develop the leadership skills of all the teaching staff by involving them in strategic planning meetings that check what is going well in the school and what needs to improve further. Governors support the school satisfactorily, and they regularly receive progress reports relating to the school's plan for improvement. Currently, the school does not check its effectiveness rigorously by measuring the impact of changes on pupils' academic learning or personal development. Consequently, governors are not as well informed about pupils' achievements as they could be.

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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	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	3

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

- Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. Your school is satisfactory. You make satisfactory progress, although many of you could do better in mathematics. Your headteacher is working hard at the right things to make your school even better, and all the staff and governors are helping. Here are the things that are best about your school:
- It is a friendly school and you behave well in your lessons and outside in the playground.
- All the staff and the governors work well together and are determined to help you make better progress in your lessons.
- Your classrooms are bright and cheerful and you enjoy coming to school These are the things the school should do to improve:
- Make sure teachers use the information they get from school tests and from marking your work to plan lessons that help all of you improve your learning, especially in mathematics.
- Help you to understand how well you are doing in your work and what you need to learn next.
- Make sure that all the staff and governors use the information they have about how well you are doing to improve the school.