

# Longlevens Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115496
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	311950
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Chris Grove

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	427
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Downham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dave Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2005
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Longlevens Gloucester GL2 0AL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01452 530177
<b>Fax number</b>	01452 530182

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than the average junior school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, principally behavioural, emotional or social difficulties, is a little below average. The school's Success Centre provides opportunities for all pupils to learn through tactile and multimedia learning. The school is an Investor in People.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Longlevens Junior is a good school. The overwhelming majority of parents are pleased with the school. The delighted parent who wrote that 'the staff are vibrant, and work hard to make school life exciting and fun – a wonderful positive atmosphere' correctly identified the hallmarks of the school. Parents are warm in their acknowledgement of the school's highly positive and supportive ethos, referring also in some cases to the style in which the school is led. One parent, for instance, wrote that the headteacher 'leads his team with passion and enthusiasm which quite clearly rubs off on the children'. Parents express strong levels of confidence in the school and its leadership. The partnership with parents is good. Pupils' personal development and their well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils are extremely well behaved, confident and polite, and have excellent social skills. Their contributions, together with the work of the school council, support extremely well the ethos and development of the school. Pupils have an excellent ability to empathise with others, and support each other very well, both academically and personally. In addition, they have a highly developed sense of responsibility to each other and to the wider world. For example, they initiate and run fundraising activities in support of the education of children in the Philippines. Outstanding pastoral care supports pupils' personal development very well. Pupils' achievement is good. Their attainment on entry to the school is generally above average. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science have mostly been above average over the last five years. All results in national tests improved in 2007, to the point where they were well above average. Standards in English are particularly high, especially for the girls. In mathematics, standards are not quite as high, although they are above average. In the main, pupils make good progress from year to year because of the good, and sometimes very good, quality of the teaching, especially of older pupils. However, their progress in mathematics is not as good in Years 3 and 4 as it is in later years. Pupils' achievement in the creative aspects of the curriculum, and notably in art, is particularly good.

In the lower years, there is a group of pupils who make slower progress in mathematics. The school is aware of this through its annual tracking, and is introducing systems to redress it. However, the very good teaching of older pupils in mathematics has a good impact on their overall progress by the time they leave the school. Although marking gives pupils praise, teachers' comments do not give pupils enough guidance in identifying the next steps in their learning. Furthermore, teachers' assessment of pupils' work is not sufficiently linked to effective tracking and targeting of their levels of attainment. This means that, in some lessons, work is not well enough matched to all pupils' needs.

The curriculum is outstanding, and offers pupils a breadth of experience through such subjects as personal, social, health and citizenship education and modern languages. The creation of the Success Centre has provided a good focus for the school's emphasis on nurturing pupils' social and emotional growth. This helps all groups of pupils to feel included and to achieve well. The exceptionally strong creative elements emphasise the arts and include topics that are very well planned to link different subjects together. Extra-curricular provision is also outstanding.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and provides a good sense of direction. This results in the strong team spirit that has been developed which promotes and sustains the positive ethos of the school. The headteacher is well supported by the other staff in the leadership team. The school has good links with other organisations, including other schools

and the services provided through the local authority. The school's good self-evaluation and the effective steps taken to improve provision and to raise standards demonstrate its good capacity to make further improvements.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the consistency of teaching, and the effectiveness of tracking of pupils' progress, in order to raise standards and improve progress in mathematics.
- Improve the impact of marking and target-setting for pupils, so that they better understand the next steps in their learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

In 2007, almost every child in Year 6 made expected progress in English, though progress in mathematics was not as good. Evidence from the inspection indicates that progress continues to be good, with pupils on track to improve further on last year's results. Those pupils with behavioural, emotional or social difficulties make the same good progress as other pupils because of the good quality of much teaching, especially of older pupils, and the good support provided for them.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are a credit to themselves and the school, and many of the skills they acquire equip them well as citizens and for the world of work. They gain good knowledge of different cultures from around the world, although they have less awareness of the many different cultures that make up modern Britain. Pupils have an extremely clear understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They make excellent decisions, both through their choice of snacks and lunch and through their participation in the very many sporting, performing, and other extra-curricular activities available. The school's designation as a Healthy School and the award of Activemark support pupils' healthy lifestyles very well. Pupils speak very highly of their school. Indeed, not one pupil spoken to, at random and in meetings during the inspection, had anything negative to say about their experiences at school. They feel extremely safe, and say there is no real bullying. Consistently above average levels of attendance, and excellent punctuality, reflect pupils' good enjoyment of school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers foster good relationships and treat pupils with warmth and respect, which leads to pupils' high levels of confidence. High expectations of behaviour and well-established classroom routines ensure pupils concentrate well. Classrooms are attractive artistic environments, and pupils respond well to thoughtfully planned activities that excite them. Good lessons are characterised by a determined air of activity. Pupils are encouraged to share ideas through cooperative ways of working, for instance with their 'response partners'. This makes a good contribution to their speaking and listening skills. Success criteria are discussed with the pupils, which enables teachers to check progress and pupils to know how they are getting on. This allows pupils to assess their own learning and achieve better progress. At its best, the pace of

learning is brisk. In those lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, these positive features are less evident. Some mathematics teaching of younger pupils, for example, includes too much instruction at the expense of opportunities for them to use their good oral skills to undertake investigative or problem-solving work. Often, all pupils do similar tasks, although some could tackle more challenging work. This is caused, in part, by the limitations in the school's use of its data tracking pupils' progress. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to work things out for themselves, to take risks, or to organise their own learning. Teaching assistants provide pupils with good support, and supplement teachers' work well.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

As a parent aptly put it, 'The school is full of energy and opportunity, way beyond the standard curriculum.' The curriculum makes learning interesting and relevant for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It gives outstanding opportunities for creativity, through which pupils extend their skills and talents and develop personal interests. The Artsmark (Gold) award is testimony to this. Throughout the school, there are many examples of excellent artwork, especially in weaving, pottery and collage. The range of visits to places of interest, such as the Steam Museum, as well as opportunities for children in Years 4 and 6 to participate in residential visits, contribute significantly to the pupils' enjoyment of their learning. The number and range of visitors to the school, exemplified by artists in residence, musicians and sports coaches, engage pupils' interests and give them the chance to learn real-life skills. The school holds the International Schools award, and as result of this focus on global education, pupils have good links with schools in other countries and a heightened understanding of the world.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides an excellent level of pastoral care and guidance. Well-established routines, high expectations of behaviour and opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility are all strong features. The ways in which the school promotes pupils' confidence and emotional well-being are also significant strengths that contribute very effectively to pupils' personal development. Arrangements to safeguard pupils, including staff vetting procedures, provision of first aid, and the measures to ensure health and safety on the site, are robust and result in pupils feeling safe and free from intimidation or harm. The school recognises that its arrangements to track progress and to set targets for pupils need improvement, and these are already under review.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

In 2007, the school exceeded its challenging targets, and has set itself higher targets for the current year, especially at the Level 5 standard. It expects to meet them. Arrangements to monitor and evaluate the curriculum and teaching through the team leaders and subject leaders are good. This has led to good self-evaluation, which has resulted in the improvement in standards and progress, especially in English, in the last two years. In mathematics, action to address limited progress by some pupils in Years 3 and 4 has been slower, although the school is aware of the issue. However, the new leadership in mathematics is resulting in closer analysis

of strengths and weaknesses in provision. The school's self-evaluation recognises that there is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching, and has made this a priority for improvement, particularly in mathematics. The governing body ensures that statutory requirements are fulfilled. Governors know the school well, and have a strong loyalty to it. They show a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their confidence to challenge the school to improve further is good.

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## Annex A

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

### 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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

26 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longlevens Junior School, Gloucester GL2 0AL

We would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes.

Longlevens Junior is a good school, and has some outstanding features. It is a really happy place for children to be, as many of you and your parents say. There are lots of really good things about your school. These are the most important ones:

- Your school has a first-class ethos and a really lovely atmosphere about it.
- You have excellent relationships with the teachers and other adults. They take outstanding care of you.
- You enjoy school and your behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent.
- Your personal development is outstanding, and this leads to your high levels of confidence, and the friendliness and care that you show towards one another.
- The school has an outstanding curriculum and outstanding out-of-school activities, which you find interesting and enjoyable.
- The headteacher and the other school leaders are doing a good job. They know what is good about your school and they want to make it even better.
- You are making good progress in your learning, and your standards are above average, especially in English.
- The teaching in your school is good.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.
- Your school has good relationships with your parents, and with other schools.

The headteacher and the other leaders have worked hard to make the school such a good place. We have asked the school to make things even better by:

- Making the teaching more consistently good, and improving the way the school checks up on how well you are doing, so that you do better in mathematics.
- Improving the way they set targets for you, and the way your work is marked, so that you have a better idea what you should do next to improve your progress.

You can help, too, by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your teachers will be making. We really enjoyed our time in your school. We wish you every success in the future.

Chris Grove Lead inspector

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Lead inspector