

Longworth Undenominational Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123154
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	314517
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Daniel Towl HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Boyce
Headteacher	Mrs Sandra North
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	School Close Longworth Abingdon OX13 5EU
Telephone number	01865 820364
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school serving the village of Longworth and surrounding area. Nearly all pupils have a white British heritage. The school has a slightly higher than average number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities particularly in literacy skills. Although deemed a socially advantaged area, pupils have a very wide variety of backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Longworth is a good school that has steadily improved in recent years and continues to do so. Parents rightly have very positive views about the school. Standards in English, mathematics and science have shown an upward trend in recent years and are now average. Indications from the most recent 2008 tests show that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are likely to be maintained in English and mathematics and improved in science. Girls and boys achieve equally well. Children make a confident start in the Foundation Stage and their basic skills develop well. This effectively underpins their good progress in school. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good and sometimes outstanding progress.

Pupils attend well and enjoy school because the work is interesting and there are many activities in which to take part. This enjoyment manifests itself in their good behaviour and willingness to tackle the tasks they are given. There is a strong sense of community which is exemplified in activities such as the whole-school 'wake and shake' to start the day, assemblies, after-school clubs and activities and events such as the school council's production, 'Longworth's Got Talent' show. Pupils are learning to live healthy lifestyles and enjoy the good range of physical education (PE) activities available both in lessons and during after-school clubs.

The school has made very good attempts to make a coherent and integrated curriculum. This has improved pupils' writing, which is good. Pupils effectively develop their writing skills in subjects such as science, geography and history because teachers make the context and purpose clear. Despite pupils' progress in the content and complexity of writing their presentation of work, in both English and mathematics, is too variable in quality.

Teaching is mostly good and improving. This is because, under the good leadership of the headteacher, the school has improved the way in which it monitors and assesses pupils' progress. This is leading to better focussed teaching and clearer learning targets based on pupils' needs. This development has been very successful in improving pupils' progress in writing in both Key Stages 1 and 2. The school is aware that this approach needs to be developed more rigorously in mathematics where progress, although good overall, is not consistent year on year. The link between assessment, target setting and focussed teaching is not yet as sharp as it could be in order to help pupils reach the highest possible levels.

The headteacher leads the school well and has a significant teaching role in addition to managing the school. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Subject managers are playing an increasingly important role in monitoring standards and progress, which has been very effective in improving pupils' literacy skills. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well managed and this leads to pupils making good progress. Although the range of ability is very wide indeed, children enter with broadly average skills. As a result of the good provision, children achieve the learning goals expected and beyond by the time they start Key Stage 1. They access a broad curriculum with appropriately challenging activities. Teachers plan the curriculum effectively with a suitable balance between self-initiated and teacher-led activities. Children are integrated well with older Key Stage 1 pupils during whole class sessions. Very good links are made with the on site pre-school group and children from

both settings join together for activities from time to time during the week. This proximity also aids very smooth transition between the pre-school group and the Reception class. Assessment is thorough and accurate though lacks some clarity in how the results of assessment link to teaching and learning objectives. External moderation of the Foundation stage provision has been very positive. Good use is made of the outdoor area as an integral part of children's learning experiences.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of the outcomes of assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress so that it has greater influence on how their work is planned to ensure consistently good progress especially in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of pupils' all round presentation of work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Some cohorts are very small, currently two pupils in Year 2, and hence there are fluctuations in the standards achieved year on year. Overall standards in both key stages have improved in recent years and in the 2007 were average. Pupils make good progress, especially in writing, which has been a whole-school focus for improvement. Pupils from a very early age are enthusiastic about writing. Progress in mathematics is good in both key stages though it is not so consistent year on year in Key Stage 2. The school is aware of this and plans to replicate the rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress currently used in writing. The school is successfully addressing a legacy of weak performance by pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils develop into confident young people and say they enjoy school, reflecting the interesting curriculum and activities provided. Pupils' behaviour is good and they are considerate to each other. They are conscientious in their approach to learning and, from an early age, show they can successfully work independently and collaboratively. They are developing appropriate views about staying healthy and take part enthusiastically in the PE activities provided. Some pupils cycle to school and others use the walking bus, which are part of the school's approach to staying safe and being environmentally friendly. Pupils appreciate the chance to put their views forward through the school council. They feel their views are taken into consideration and they have had an input into issues such as how money raised might be spent and the establishment of 'buddy benches' for those who feel lonely at playtime. The school has identified that it needs to improve pupils' awareness of other cultures and is exploring ways in which there could be more interaction within the immediate community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good resulting in pupils' overall good achievements and enjoyment. Teachers and pupils have very good relationships. Progress in pupils' writing skills are good because due emphasis is given to regular and thorough analyses of pupils' achievements. Teachers have made good efforts to ensure that learning is relevant and interesting and they have developed

a number of projects that successfully link subjects together. Lessons give many opportunities for pupils to put their views and ideas forward and this supports good development in speaking and listening. Although teachers are collecting significant amounts of information about progress, and have good knowledge of pupils' achievements, it is not used consistently enough, to ensure that good progress is made in all year groups especially in mathematics. Lessons regularly give pupils opportunities to evaluate their own and others' work and this successfully helps them understand more about their own progress. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, often through offering help and guidance on a one to one basis.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils experience a wide and interesting curriculum that endeavours to make strong links in learning across subjects. The school has embarked on the process of updating its long-term curriculum planning. This is an important factor in the school's success in making learning enjoyable. Pupils respond well to their tasks, exemplified by the way pupils in Key Stage 1 engaged enthusiastically while writing in the style of a non-fiction text as part of a project about plants. There is good provision to support the development of key skills in English, mathematics. Information and communication technology (ICT) has improved in recent years. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps and future economic well-being. They learn about relationships, health and safety in their personal and social education and in the 'circle times' when issues of concern can be discussed. The curriculum is suitably enriched through the many clubs and opportunities to visit places of interest and take part in residential visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. All pupils are included well in the many activities undertaken. Supervision is good and class practices are safe. Risk assessments are appropriately completed where required. Pupils are clear that they know how well they are doing, either through being told or by written comments in teachers' marking. Older pupils are aware of their learning targets in English and mathematics. These are referred to in lessons and changed as they are achieved. Learning difficulties and disabilities are identified as soon as possible and the school has good links with outside agencies to provide additional help and guidance. This means that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good and sometimes outstanding progress. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are suitably rigorous and meet statutory requirements but some aspects of the written policies require updating.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has shown good leadership and management in improving the performance of the school. The leadership is successfully focussed on creating an environment and ethos that is enabling pupils to achieve well. The headteacher has rightly raised expectations of what can be achieved not only of teachers but also of pupils. Realistic targets are now being set, but as yet the link between the monitoring, assessment, and its influence on teaching and learning to help pupils achieve outstanding progress is not fully in place.

There are good links with parents and the local community. It is altogether a cohesive school community where all staff are focussed on providing enjoyable learning experiences, whether in lessons or extra curricular activities. Governors fulfil most of their duties well and actively involve themselves in supporting the headteacher in monitoring pupils' progress.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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?	2
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
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

23 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longworth Undenominational Primary School, Abingdon, OX13 5EU

Thank you for talking to me and helping me when I inspected your school. You were all very polite and well behaved. Your school is a good and improving school. You have a good headteacher who is working hard with the teachers and other staff to make sure that you make good progress in your learning. You said you enjoy your lessons and that is because the teachers make them interesting. They link subjects together well so that you can improve your English skills while learning about other subjects such as geography or history. You have all made good progress in the way you write about things but you need to make sure that all your work is as neat as possible.

The headteacher and teachers regularly check how well you are doing and I have asked them to use that information even more carefully to make sure that all your lessons are helping each of you learn really well especially in mathematics. You can help by making sure you know what it is you need to do to improve.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Towl

Her Majesty's Inspector