

Long Knowle Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104320
Local Authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	324016
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2009
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	265
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	June Bowen
Headteacher	Martyn Bidgood
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Blackwood Avenue Wednesfield Wolverhampton WV11 1EB
Telephone number	01902 558985
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-size primary school situated on the outskirts of Wolverhampton. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision includes both Nursery and Reception classes. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. Most pupils are White British and very few are at the early stage of learning to speak English. The school has been awarded the Quality Standard for Special Educational Needs and Educational Inclusion at silver level.

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. Parental views were typified by one comment which said, 'We have always found the school to be of a high standard and any concerns raised with teachers are readily addressed.' Pupils say they enjoy school because lessons are fun and that learning will help them get a job when they leave school.

Children enter school with skills and abilities well below expected levels. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a secure start and children make good progress at the beginning of their education. Children do not always have sufficient opportunities to work independently and move freely between the indoor and outdoor learning areas. Across the whole school, each pupil is supported well and given equal opportunities to make satisfactory progress in their academic skills and good progress in their personal skills. Standards have risen slowly over the last few years and pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are reaching standards in line with national averages overall. They are, however, making less progress in mathematics where standards are relatively low. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as others but from a lower starting point. Systems to monitor and record progress are good and these are well used by leaders and by teachers in the majority of lessons. The group activities are planned to match the ability of the groups but in a few lessons too much time is spent teaching the whole class where the ability range is too wide for effective learning. Whilst much of the teaching is good, and in these lessons pupils make good progress, there is a significant variability in the quality of teaching. Not all levels of management are sufficiently involved in the observation of lessons to ensure that the best features of teaching are identified and shared to ensure consistently good teaching. Target setting is in place and most pupils are aware of their targets. The marking of pupils' work is regular and tells pupils where they have gone wrong, and most also tells the pupil how to improve. The curriculum engages pupils through interesting and enjoyable activities. A good range of extra-curricular activities successfully enriches pupils' learning and personal development.

Pastoral care is good, and safeguarding requirements, including those for internet security, are met fully. The school's strong links with external agencies contribute to the good support for pupils who find learning difficult for whatever reason. Pupils behave well, enjoy school and know how to keep themselves safe. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils make a good contribution to the community, eat healthily and take part in sport with enthusiasm. The sound basic skills they acquire, as well as their effective personal development, ensure they are satisfactorily prepared for their future.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further. Governance is good. The school ensures that it works with the community to help pupils develop a satisfactory and caring understanding of the world they live in and provides support to members of the community when needed.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children love coming to school. They achieve well. They enter school with skills well below the expected level for their age, particularly in using numbers. By the time they start Year 1, they have made up a lot of ground. Children make most progress in their social and personal

development because of the good caring support provided. They quickly learn to get on well with each other and with adults. They behave well and are often absorbed in the activities such as watching paint marbling. They participate enthusiastically in all the activities provided, listening to teachers and trying things out for themselves.

Teachers cover each of the expected areas of learning well ensuring that children are able to make good progress. They balance activities indoors and out, but do not yet achieve a free movement between all the indoor and outdoor areas. Teachers adapt the curriculum suitably to individual needs. Often, activities are too teacher-led and children do not fully develop their skills of choosing what to do. Teachers look after the children well. They create a safe and secure environment where children can grow in confidence. They guide children in the knowledge of what they do well and where they can do better.

The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage results from good leadership and careful planning based on the regular assessment of children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards especially in mathematics.
- Involve all levels of management in carrying out rigorous monitoring of teaching and ensure that teaching is consistently good across the school.
- Provide more opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to choose their own activities, including free movement between the indoor and outdoor areas.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils generally enter Key Stage 1 with standards that are below average. Standards have been rising slowly since the last inspection but are still below average at the end of Year 2. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making satisfactory progress overall. In 2008, standards in reading were exceptionally low but this was unusual and has already been addressed. In Key Stage 2, standards have risen from being below average in 2007 to broadly average in 2008. There is, however, a variation between subjects with mathematics being much weaker in both years. Standards seen in school confirm that pupils are consistently making satisfactory progress, although less in mathematics than in other subjects. Standards in mathematics are below average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to others in lessons because of good support by teaching assistants. The more able pupils are also making similar progress in lessons because they are given some extension work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and the school operates as a harmonious community. Through their good behaviour and their respect for others, pupils show they know right from wrong. Within lessons, the good behaviour allows all pupils to concentrate on learning, to which they show good attitudes. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school but currently attendance is only satisfactory. They know how to keep safe and who to talk to if they have any problems. Pupils said the very little bullying is always dealt with quickly. They

make healthy choices of food and look forward to sports activities. This is reflected in the very recent award of Healthy School status. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They enjoy being school counsellors and their responsibilities, such as helping in assembly. They take part in many activities to raise money for charities. Whilst many aspects of school life, such as the use of handheld computers, prepare pupils well for later life, the overall preparation is only satisfactory because they do not reach expected standards in mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory. Some teaching is good where teachers have clear delivery, brisk pace, good questioning of pupils and tasks are well matched to the abilities of pupils. Pupils want to learn and pay attention in lessons. They are encouraged to work in small groups as well as individually. They understand what they have to do because teachers all have good subject knowledge and explain things clearly to them. All lessons, even where teaching is only satisfactory, are made to be interesting. Teachers make good use of the assessment systems in planning the work but the effectiveness of this is variable. In some lessons, the pace is slow and too long is spent teaching to the whole class. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported by the teaching assistants and the strategies provided for them. Teachers mark work regularly with helpful comments and generally with guidance on how to improve. There is evidence that this advice is not always taken.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has been revised so that pupils' skills are developed through topics that cover all areas of the curriculum. This makes lessons more enjoyable. Good strategies have been introduced to inspire pupils to improve their writing and this has contributed to the rise in standards in English. Strategies to raise standards in mathematics have not yet affected end of year results. Individual plans are provided for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure they get the support they need. The curriculum is responsive to local needs and links are developed to help pupils develop a wider knowledge of the world they live in. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and pupils are made aware of health and safety issues. Both cultural development and citizenship are promoted well through learning a 'language of the month'. As part of their contribution to the community and to learn about the local environment, pupils have been involved in the design of a local park. There is a wide range of activities in addition to lessons which broaden pupils' experiences, increase their enjoyment and contribute to their personal development. These include clubs, themed days, visits out and visitors to the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The high level of commitment of staff ensures good quality care throughout the school. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are securely in place. Health and safety requirements are met. There are good systems for managing behaviour and monitoring attendance. Actions to improve attendance have been taken with the good support from the appropriate agencies

but these have not impacted fully on published figures because of a recent high level of illness as well as a few families still taking holidays in term time. As part of the good care provided, the school offers a very well organised breakfast club which not only provides a healthy breakfast but activities to promote fitness. Pupils are able to attend an after-school club at a partner school. All staff work well to ensure all pupils are included in activities. Pupils who need extra help are provided for effectively and make the same progress as others. The few pupils who have English as an additional language are given the help they need by teachers and support staff. Academic guidance within the classroom is good with assessment systems in place to monitor progress over time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership team has a common vision of improving the school to give pupils the best opportunities. Actions from the previous inspection have been addressed and standards have started to rise. Progress has now improved but is still only satisfactory in a small minority of year groups. Assessment systems are better and are now used consistently by teachers and leaders. Monitoring of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure good teaching. Self-evaluation shows that leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development. These are addressed in the school development plan, although actions are not clearly prioritised. The setting of challenging targets has contributed to raising standards in English and in science. The impact on standards in mathematics is not yet evident. Governors carry out their statutory duties well and provide good governance. They are actively involved through links with subject coordinators and through close monitoring of the areas for development within the school. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of what is needed to promote community cohesion. They have produced a procedure for promoting community cohesion based on this understanding and a thorough audit of current provision and needs. All aspects of community cohesion are satisfactorily addressed but at this stage monitoring of impact is informal as the first review date has not been reached.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

30 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Long Knowle Primary School, Wolverhampton, WV11 1EB

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and seeing how your school is helping you learn. We were impressed by how well you behave in lessons and how polite you are to visitors.

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. These are some of the strengths of your school.

- You enjoy being at school and find your lessons are fun.
- You behave well and develop good personal skills.
- The staff care about you and look after you well.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- There is a wide range of clubs, after-school activities and visits.
- There are good systems in place to monitor your progress.
- Your headteacher and staff are working hard to improve your learning further.

In order to improve the school further, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- help you reach higher standards in mathematics
- improve how lessons are monitored so that teachers are helped to always teach good lessons
- increase the opportunities children in the Nursery and Reception have to choose their own activities and move between the different learning areas.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead inspector