

Loscoe CofE (C) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112828
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325696
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2009
Reporting inspector	David Wynford-Jones

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	151
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	Mr Peter Wood
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church View Loscoe Heanor Derbyshire DE75 7RT
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage. None is learning to speak English as an additional language. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EFYS) with skills and knowledge broadly similar to those expected for their age. The percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs is broadly average. Most have been identified as having moderate learning difficulties. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Sports Active Mark awards. It was recently accredited with the Initial Award of Good Practice for its anti-bullying work.

The school shares the site with a children's centre which was inspected separately at the same time as this inspection.

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 and improving school. It provides sound value for money. The rate of pupils' progress is accelerating and standards by the end of Year 6 are rising. Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. Over the last two years, there has been a marked rise in standards. The strategies introduced to raise standards are established in writing. In mathematics and science, they have yet to be consolidated in all classes. Children in the EFYS make sound progress. Their attainment by the end of the Reception class is broadly average.

The improvements have been brought about by the determination of the headteacher and staff to raise standards. There is greater consistency in the approach to teaching of writing, in providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake investigations in mathematics and science and to developing their knowledge and use of subject specific vocabulary. The better use of assessment procedures and the analysis of the results are leading to higher expectations from teachers and pupils. However, leaders and managers at all levels do not compare the school's outcomes sufficiently rigorously with the national averages. As a result, they do not identify all groups who are potentially underachieving. Data is used appropriately to identify pupils who are experiencing difficulties in learning and to target support. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for these pupils. This enables them to make progress similar to their peers. In contrast, they do not consistently challenge the more able. There are examples of good practice but teaching is satisfactory overall, because it is not consistent enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress.

A major review of the curriculum is underway to enrich it and make it more exciting and meaningful. Links are being developed successfully between a limited range of subjects under an overarching theme. However, the curriculum does not routinely provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of other cultures and ways of life. As a result, pupils are not sufficiently well prepared to live in today's mixed society. Nevertheless, the curriculum is satisfactory overall and supports the pupils' sound personal development. The good pastoral care has resulted in improvements in the pupils' personal development. It ensures that the pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and where to seek support from adults if they need it. They make secure relationships with adults and each other and are keen to take on responsibility. Most pupils behave well in class and around the school, but not all attain this high standard. Racist incidents are rare, and when they occur, they are treated seriously. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. There are inconsistencies in the use and effectiveness of academic guidance. Overall, pupils develop satisfactory learning skills that equip them adequately for their future lives.

Leadership and management are satisfactory with sound capacity across all levels to ensure that the school continues to improve. The school's leadership is committed to every pupil's enjoyment and success in learning. The 'Grounds for Change Project' has been embraced with enthusiasm. Staff have responded positively to the growth in numbers and the necessity to teach pupils in the hall. The headteacher is working with the appropriate authorities to try to secure additional teaching space. In the meantime, sound alternative strategies are in place to ensure pupils continue to take part in regular physical activities through visits to the sports centre. Most parents are appreciative of all that the school provides. Many are more involved in the life of the school since the formation of the Parent, Teacher and Friends Association in September 2007. One parent captures the views of others, 'the school is welcoming, the staff

are extremely approachable'. This contributes to the school's reputation locally as a caring community and its fostering of community links.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children's skills on entry to the Reception class vary from year to year because of the small numbers entering school. Overall, they are broadly similar to those expected for their age. Children make sound progress in all areas of learning and achieve satisfactorily. Good assessment procedures help the teacher plan activities that take account of the children's prior experiences, learning needs and interests. The strong focus on teaching letters and sounds makes a significant contribution to children's progress in early literacy skills. Staff work and plan well together as a team. They offer good levels of support and encourage children to become independent. In one lesson, a group of children successfully developed their language, number and observational skills. They were asked to choose pairs of shoes, match them to photographs, find shoe boxes to put them in and use their collections for counting. The teaching assistant ably extended their vocabulary and challenged their thinking.

Children are gaining an increasingly broad understanding across all areas of learning because activities are planned creatively to help them do this. They are encouraged to be independent learners and personal development is good. Children's welfare is given high priority and this is a key factor in helping them to feel safe so they can flourish. While activities in the classroom are well organised, opportunities for development through the outdoor curriculum are limited due to restricted space and lack of shelter. Management is satisfactory and links with parents and the Children's Centre Playgroup are developing. Parents are pleased with the start their children make and typically say 'I am really happy with the progress my child is making at Loscoe School'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve consistency in teaching and learning to mirror the best.
- Consolidate the initiatives in mathematics and science to further the pupils' skills in undertaking investigations and developing their understanding of the specific vocabulary of these subjects.
- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels use external data more rigorously to monitor and evaluate the work of the school.
- Extend and promote the current initiative to develop links between subjects and provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The 2008 Year 6 provisional national test results suggest that standards in English and mathematics were in line with the national average. In science, they were exceptionally high. The latest teacher assessments shows that pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to achieve broadly similar outcomes in English and mathematics, but in science, the same high standards are unlikely to be reached. In the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2008 standards

were broadly average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Only a few of the pupils attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Their achievement in all three areas was broadly satisfactory. The school's most recent assessment information shows that pupils are now making satisfactory progress overall but it is variable between classes. This is because of variations in the quality of teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school succeeds in making pupils feel valued and in helping them to acquire a good understanding of healthy living. Pupils are developing into responsible young people who make a satisfactory contribution to the school and the community. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is improving. It is now satisfactory. However, despite the school's best efforts, there remains a small nucleus of pupils who do not come to school regularly. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. They say that there is little, if any, bullying and that they feel safe in school. One pupil said, 'People get along with each other here and they always remember to say please and thank you'. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, and social development is shown in their sensitive awareness of others within school, their support for each other in lessons and their help in the playground as mini-leaders. They entertain elderly people at the 'Evergreen Club' and frequently raise funds for charities. They take their various responsibilities seriously and relish opportunities to show enterprise. However, pupils' knowledge of other faiths, customs, cultures and ways of life is less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teaching is competent but not consistently effective enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress. Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour well. They are consistent in their high expectations and the way they reinforce good behaviour positively through praise. Teachers plan conscientiously and in the best lessons provide pupils with activities that are lively, challenge their thinking and accelerate their learning. Pupils make slower progress in lessons where teachers do not clearly identify what they are going to learn and do not match the work precisely enough to their needs and abilities. Teaching assistants work well with the teachers and provide valuable support to pupils who find learning difficult.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a curriculum that meets the needs of the vast majority of its pupils. It is enriched by visits, visitors to the school, themed days and a range of lunchtime and after school clubs. These activities support the pupils' educational and personal development effectively. A range of well-chosen strategies has led to improvements. However, these strategies are not yet firmly embedded in everyday practice. Staff are in the early stages of developing a curriculum that links learning in a range of subjects under a common theme. Staff plan to reinforce basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in the topics. Staff have yet to evaluate the impact of these changes that were introduced in September 2008. Pupils say they 'enjoy the lessons and they are helping us to learn'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel included, secure and valued. One parent wrote, 'My daughter is treated with respect and her opinions are valued'. Links with other schools, sports clubs and organisations and other outside agencies are good. These contribute much to the pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils who find learning difficult receive good support. Procedures for health and safety, child protection and safeguarding meet current requirements.

The quality of academic guidance is variable. Overall, it is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are being used increasingly effectively to raise standards and set targets in writing and in aspects of mathematics. In some of the pupils' writing books, there are examples of good marking that supports the pupils in understanding how well they have done. In other subjects, it is not as explicit. As a result, many pupils do not know what they have to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides clear direction for the work of the school. The detailed school development plan is focused on raising attainment and is based on a sound evaluation of the school's performance. There is clear evidence to show that this is having an impact in raising achievement. Middle managers fulfil their roles and responsibilities satisfactorily. Governors are supportive. They are beginning to fulfil their role in challenging the school to bring about further improvements. Using projected outcomes for each pupil, they set realistic but still challenging statutory targets. Governors actively encourage involvement in the local community and have begun to undertake an audit of the community needs. They have already identified there is more work to be done to develop pupils' understanding of other communities both in Europe and globally.

The majority of parents commented positively about the school. However, some raised concerns that their children's progress may be slowed in the mixed aged classes. Recent teacher assessments show that these pupils are making the expected rate of progress.

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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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 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

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	2
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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

29 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Loscoe C of E Primary School, Church View, Loscoe. DE75 7RT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you. You were very friendly and polite. The vast majority of you behave well in class and in the playground. We were very pleased to hear that you like coming to school and to see that your attendance is improving and is now satisfactory. Most of you know a lot about safe and healthy living. You told us about the things you should eat to stay healthy and about the importance of having lots of exercise - well done.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. The standards you reach in reading, writing and mathematics are similar to those of pupils in other schools. Your teachers have introduced a number of strategies to help you improve your standards. These are proving successful in writing. To help you, we have asked your teachers to continue to give you lots of opportunities to undertake investigations in maths and science, to make certain you understand the vocabulary and to ensure that all lessons are as good as the best.

Your teachers are working hard to plan the way they organise and teach the subjects through a theme. Several of you told me how much you were enjoying the topic on 'pirates'. We have asked your teachers to continue with this work but at the same time to help you to learn about different beliefs and ways of life of people from other cultures.

The school has introduced a detailed system to record how well you are doing. We have suggested that more use is made of this information to help your teachers and the governors to know how well the school is doing and if there are any groups of pupils who need extra support.

With best wishes for the future.

David Wynford Jones

Lead inspector