

# Longford Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	124074
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380793
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	342
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Mate
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Stote
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Ascot Drive Cannock WS11 1PD
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<b>Fax number</b>	01543 510397
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	2–3 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380793



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Aitken Additional inspector

Christina Page Additional inspector

Israr Khan Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 21 lessons taught by 16 teachers. Scrutinies of pupils' work in English and mathematics were carried out. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment information. The inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 175 parents and carers, 100 pupils and 35 staff.

## Information about the school

Longford Primary is larger than most primary schools. A very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The percentage of pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs is below average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage through one part-time Nursery class and two Reception classes. The additional class in Reception is due to many children joining the school at this point, some from other settings and some with no pre-school experience.

The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

A before- and after-school club (Links) operates on the school site. This is managed by the school's governing body and was observed as part of this inspection.

The school has Healthy Schools status and Dyslexia Friendly status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school, which has made improvements in key areas of its work since the last inspection. A significant strength is the purposeful use made of data to monitor pupils' progress and adapt the curriculum to support the needs of all groups. The school has worked successfully to raise attendance.
- Pupils achieve well. Initially children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge them fully and extend their experiences in all areas of learning. Pupils make good progress thereafter and leave the school at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is broadly average. Progress is slightly better in English than in mathematics, because there are fewer good opportunities for pupils, especially the more able, to practise their numeracy skills in different subjects.
- Teaching is good overall, with some outstanding elements such as some innovative approaches and excellent use of discussion. Good relationships between staff and pupils promote a purposeful climate for learning. Where teaching is occasionally satisfactory, teachers do not adapt their questioning techniques sufficiently to enable all pupils to sustain their 'listening ears' and practise their speaking skills fully.
- Pupils behave well and their social skills develop steadily with their increasing maturity. Key Stage 2 pupils are keen to help each other and collaborate well in shared activities. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. Pupils, and their parents and carers, feel that the school is a safe place in which to learn.
- Senior leaders have strong aspirations for pupils' progress and personal development. Over the last three years more robust leadership systems have been implemented and the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been tackled successfully.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise the pace of children’s progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - providing consistently challenging teaching in all areas of their learning.
  
- Raise pupils’ achievement further by:
  - making consistently good use of questioning in Key Stage 1 to sharpen pupils’ readiness for learning and to enhance their speaking and listening skills
  - creating better opportunities across the curriculum for pupils, especially those who are more able, to reinforce and extend their numeracy skills.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are correct in their view that their children achieve well over time in the school. Children’s attainment on entry to Nursery is often well below national expectations. While their progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, children who attend from the start of Nursery benefit from the greater continuity this affords and some make good progress. Pupils’ attainment and rates of progress rise considerably in Year 2 and this is sustained well until the end of Year 6, when attainment is broadly average, and higher than this in reading. In 2011 the school attained its best results for five years in both Year 2 and Year 6. The work seen during the inspection confirms that this improvement is being maintained and standards are rising. All groups of pupils make good progress in lessons, especially in Key Stage 2, and achieve their challenging targets. Lower attainers are closing the gap in performance with groups of pupils nationally.

By the end of Year 2 pupils’ attainment in reading is average. More-able pupils read confidently and fluently, although sometimes with little expressiveness, while less-able pupils demonstrate an understanding of the need to segment unfamiliar words before sounding them out. By the end of Year 6 pupils’ attainment in reading is above average. An increasing range of opportunities to develop creativity, for example through drama activities, have had a significant impact on improving pupils’ literacy skills. Pupils benefit from well-planned opportunities to develop their writing skills. These have been made more purposeful by linking them to topic activities and through extended writing tasks, for example the composition of letters to charities. This approach has been particularly successful in motivating boys to write in greater depth. Opportunities for pupils, especially the more able, to practise their calculation and data interpretation skills in subjects other than mathematics and science are less well developed. This means the more able have less practice in choosing the strategies they need to use for a problem in a new context, which is a higher-level skill.

Pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs are challenged well and also make good progress. For example, in a highly effective lesson in Year 6,

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these pupils adopted the roles of presenters on a shopping channel to present their classmates with convincing reasons for buying their products. Pupils' good achievement and improving attendance prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers rightly believe that pupils are taught well, and their children fully agree. Teachers' good expectations for pupils' progress and behaviour foster secure classroom relationships and pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Teachers research their pupils' preferred styles of learning and, in accordance with the school's Dyslexia Friendly award, make extensive use of visual symbols and other interactive modes of learning to support pupils who encounter difficulty with the written word. The curriculum provides a good framework for teachers' planning. This is clear and, for the most part, well thought out to provide opportunities to extend pupils' learning. Lessons are typically characterised by high expectations of what pupils can do, a variety of engaging, purposeful tasks and ongoing verbal feedback. Regular reference to success criteria and opportunities for pupils to redraft their answers help older pupils understand how to improve their work. Teachers place learning in contexts that capture the interest of pupils. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 English lesson the teacher provided intentionally poor examples of her own work for pupils to review. This provoked a highly productive discussion and encouraged pupils to use a wide range of complex sentences to comment on the rights and wrongs of mythical characters.

Teaching assistants support pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs very effectively, clarifying the teacher's instructions, modelling good listening, giving behaviour prompts and acting as 'talk partners'. This helps these pupils to gain confidence in contributing to class discussions, stay engaged and improve their standard of work. On a few occasions, teaching is only satisfactory, for example when questioning does not ensure that all pupils are expected to listen intently and respond. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, and occasionally elsewhere, opportunities are missed to intervene in children's activities to really extend or challenge them in their learning. Teachers' marking is of a good standard. Pupils' contribution to their learning through self- and peer-assessment is an improving feature of their work.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' hardworking approach and good attitudes to their learning are important factors in their enjoyment of school and their good achievement. Children settle quickly in Nursery and most children in the Early Years Foundation Stage demonstrate the capacity to make choices independently and to complete tasks. A few children are able to work imaginatively, for example in justifying their selection of colours while painting a picture. Older pupils have good attitudes and concentrate fully and to help each other learn well, for example in paired partner routines. Younger pupils are helped to acquire these skills through reward stickers, 'good to be

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green' incentives and other techniques for managing their behaviour. On a few occasions in Key Stage 1, pupils do not concentrate fully or listen carefully, especially when they are not being questioned directly by the teacher. This limits the quality of the oral contribution they make while working with their partner. However, they respond well to teachers' interventions.

As pupils progress through the school they set appropriate standards for themselves and respond well to the staff's guidance and expectations, as evidenced by the rarity of fixed-term exclusions in the school's records. A large majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 collaborate effectively and offer constructive advice to each other about how to improve their work. Pupils make good use of opportunities to contribute to school life, for example as councillors, peer mentors and as prefects. Pupils' questionnaires indicate that they feel safe in school. Pupils say that bullying of any kind is uncommon, and that if it does happen it is effectively dealt with. They are confident that adults or peer mentors can resolve their concerns. They add that pupils mostly behave well and adhere to safety rules, but on some occasions arguments can become heated. Parents and carers hold similar views. Pupils acquire a good understanding of factors that might endanger their personal safety as these matters are regularly explored in 'circle time' and in health and social education lessons. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy diet and their enjoyment of physical exercise through a broad range of sporting activities is reflected in the Healthy Schools status. Over the last four terms the school's attendance rate has risen from low to broadly average.

### **Leadership and management**

Senior leaders are ambitious for the school and work energetically to secure improvement. Since the last inspection they have raised pupils' attainment, accelerated rates of progress across Key Stages 1 and 2, and improved the quality of teaching. They have successfully implemented a range of measures to improve pupils' writing skills, with the result that in Year 6 pupils' achievement is now equal in writing to that in reading and mathematics. Governors share leaders' strong ambitions and work successfully with staff to enhance provision. Accordingly, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Leaders have maintained an effective twin-track focus in promoting pupils' personal well-being together with their academic achievement. A central plank of this work has been the development of a detailed tracking system, charting pupils' progress in their learning and analysing their social needs. This has enabled leaders to identify at an early stage groups of pupils or individuals who require extra support and to implement a substantial range of effective interventions, including the successful nurture group, to improve outcomes for pupils. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of all pupils and provide them with a good education. Gaps in achievement between different groups are insignificant because the school makes a strong contribution to promoting equalities and tackling potential discrimination. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. The before- and after-school club offers a well-managed and useful childcare facility for

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parents and carers.

Leaders have sought to improve the quality of teaching through a wider distribution of leadership responsibilities, whole-school training on specific initiatives, such as phonics, and through the implementation of a consistently applied marking policy. The impact of new strategies is monitored effectively through an appropriately wide range of activities including performance management. All of these arrangements are working well but some variation in the quality of teaching remains. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, with particular strengths in the last three elements. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to reflect on their learning, to use their imagination and creativity in lessons, especially in literacy lessons, and to extend their cultural horizons through French and music lessons and visits, such as to the local Sikh temple and mosque.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



6 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Longford Primary School, Cannock, WS11 1PD**

I would like to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school recently and for sharing your views with us, including through the questionnaires you completed. Yours is a good school and the following reasons are important in explaining why it is successful.

- You are taught well and this helps you to reach levels of attainment that are broadly average and rising by the end of Year 6. You achieve well, particularly in reading and writing.
- You told us you feel safe and cared for by the staff. They also give you good tips for improving your work. You play your part by behaving well and making sure everyone gets on well with each other.
- The school is well led by the senior leaders. They keep a very close check on your progress and step in quickly to help pupils who are having difficulties with their work or social skills.
- The school now provides a better education for pupils than it did when inspectors visited last time.

We have asked the staff to do the following things to help you achieve even better.

- Raise the level of children's skills in Nursery and Reception.
- Improve pupils' listening and speaking skills in Year 1 and Year 2.
- Give all pupils, especially those who find learning easier, more chances to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects.

You can help by continuing to work hard and enjoy your learning. It is also important that you do your best to keep up your improved rates of attendance.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken  
Lead inspector

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