

Lydbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115531
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	357770
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Brooks
Headteacher	Simon Lusted
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Observations included 10 lessons taught by seven members of staff. Meetings were held with pupils, the governing body and staff. Inspectors looked at the Governing Body minutes, curriculum plans and assessment documents. The questionnaires returned by 67 pupils, 48 parents and carers, and 6 staff were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How well boys are progressing in English throughout Key Stage 2.
- The extent to which pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve.
- The effectiveness of opportunities for children to learn outdoors in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Information about the school

Lydbrook is a small primary school that serves the village of the same name. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have speech and language difficulties. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Nursery and one Reception class. The school's population is relatively stable but, a year ago, eight pupils transferred to Lydbrook following the closure of a nearby school.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Lydbrook Primary School provides an outstanding quality of education. The school is an exciting place to learn where pupils feel exceptionally safe. They are outstandingly well prepared for their future lives and make a very impressive contribution to the community. Classrooms and the extensive school grounds abound with interesting and challenging activities that capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Pupils are full of praise for the education they receive. One commented, 'We have a brilliant education as well as having fun.' Parents and carers are similarly impressed. One wrote, 'The school has a very high standard of teachers and support staff. I couldn't have wished for my child to attend a better primary school than this.'

Pupils' good academic progress and highly successful personal development are the result of teaching and learning which are consistently good and sometimes outstanding. This is underpinned by an innovative and engaging curriculum, and first-class care, support and guidance. Pupils' outstanding behaviour, positive attitudes, together with their mature approach to learning, make a significant contribution to their progress. Academically, pupils achieve well through the school and reach above average standards of attainment by the end of Year 6.

Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress, some making exceptional improvement in reading and writing. However, their progress in mathematics is not so consistent because some find difficulty in using their numeracy skills to solve problems.

The dynamic leadership of the headteacher is central to the school's continuing improvement. The senior leaders and all staff share a determination to help all pupils do the best they can, and they have the drive, expertise and enthusiasm to realise this ambition. The governing body provides outstanding support. Governors have a remarkable degree of insight into the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders at all levels demonstrate rigorous self-evaluation and this leads to highly effective development planning and subsequent action to continually improve the school. They know that community cohesion is promoted successfully, especially at local level, but the governing body and staff are rightly seeking ways to deepen pupils' understanding of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom. The headway made on many fronts in recent years, together with first-rate strategic planning, indicates that the school has an outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress pupils with special educational needs make in mathematics by:

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- helping them to use their increasing skills in comprehension to understand word problems in mathematics
- helping them to recognise how they can apply their basic skills in numeracy to tackle mathematical problems.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity by:
 - ensuring that this is given a stronger emphasis in the school's promotion of community cohesion
 - providing first-hand experiences for pupils to engage with children from different communities and diverse backgrounds within the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Although the small numbers in each year group lead to slight fluctuations in achievement from year to year, the overall picture is that pupils achieve well academically from their wide-ranging starting points. This was fully supported by observations of good work in lessons and pupils' books during the inspection. During a lesson in the mixed Years 1 and 2 class, the younger pupils quickly learned how to use a number line to help when adding; the Year 2 pupils, in the mixed Years 2 and 3 class, showed good levels of understanding as they constructed bar charts. At Key Stage 2, there is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils' confidence in literacy has increased significantly. Year 6 pupils made rapid progress in simulating television interviews, using the appropriate vocabulary and writing scripts, and they spoke clearly and expressively when performing for their classmates. Year 5 pupils showed a very good understanding of simile, metaphor and onomatopoeia as they wrote group poems. Girls enjoy English reading and writing and boys are also developing their skills equally effectively. This was evident in the high-quality descriptive writing in Year 6. For example, one pupil wrote, 'In the lair of doom, I could see gigantic green spiders spinning massive slimy, sticky webs. High screech screams hurt my ears. The smell of death was all around. Something tickled my neck' ♦'

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. In particular, those who find difficulty in communicating, because of their limited language skills and/or speech and pronunciation problems, make good progress in reading and writing due to skilful support. However, they often find difficulty in using these developing skills to get to grips with mathematical problems and sometimes show a lack of confidence in using basic number facts to solve them.

Pupils' personal development is a real strength. Healthy School Status and the additional Health for Schools award are reflected in pupils' extremely impressive knowledge of the importance of keeping safe and healthy. Pupils do many things for the school and wider community, such as being school councillors and mentors to their friends and younger pupils. They eagerly act as monitors in the school office; and by leading in projects, such as energy conservation and recycling. High moral values are evident not only through pupils' daily interactions with other pupils and staff, but also through their strong commitment to supporting those less fortunate than themselves. Involvement in an extremely wide range of charities, together with the study of other countries, develops

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pupils' understanding of local and global issues, although pupils have few opportunities to gain insights through first-hand experiences into cultural diversity within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is carefully designed to reflect the rural location of the school, at the same time extending pupils' understanding of the wider world. Teachers skilfully engage pupils and help them to develop their academic and personal skills in meaningful contexts. Work is planned to promote 'successful learners' and 'responsible citizens'. Teachers devise units of study which, where possible, focus on language, enterprise, and the environment, and have a global dimension. During the school's recent centenary celebrations, pupils gained insights into local history by interviewing previous pupils, researching changes within the village, at the same time developing their computer skills as they edited video footage.

Whenever possible, teachers engage pupils in practical activities. This was seen when using Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* as a starting point, pupils in the Years 2 and 3 class studied the text, made different flavoured chocolate, looked at the work of Quentin Blake and discussed the principles of fair trade with Africa. This approach is dependent on the considerable skills of the teaching staff. Admirable relationships and excellent behaviour create an environment in which pupils are very well motivated to learn. Prompts for learning abound in classrooms and pupils are well aware of what they

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have to do to improve their skills. They regularly review their own progress and that of their classmates, often using criteria they have helped to devise at the beginning of a topic. Staff keep a close eye on pupils' progress and use their own records and assessment data to provide work at an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils. Occasionally, however, the more able pupils go over old ground before moving swiftly onto more challenging work.

A highly inclusive ethos ensures that pupils' concerns are quickly highlighted and addressed with sensitive support; parents value this greatly. One reflected their views with the comment, 'They have gone above and beyond to make our son's educational experience a tremendously positive one.' Pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable receive excellent support. Pupils with speech, language or communication difficulties are very well supported by excellent programmes, including those from external agencies. Arrangements for transition into and out of the school are excellent because of the well-established links with parents and with receiving schools. Pupils enjoy the extra clubs before and after school which enhance pupils' wider personal development and provide a safe, friendly environment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Under the highly effective leadership of the headteacher, the school has flourished and attainment has improved year on year. Central to this improvement is an excellent programme of staff development, based on thorough monitoring of teaching and learning in which each member of staff is able to expand their range of skills. Senior leaders communicate ambition extremely well and work cohesively to sustain a shared sense of purpose. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate, and planning for improvement is measured, thoughtful and set out clearly. Information about how well pupils are progressing is used to set suitably challenging targets for attainment, with all staff eager to maintain the pace of improvement. The school promotes equality of opportunity for all and eliminates all types of discrimination very well because it is focused on the needs of pupils as individuals. Currently, there is a concerted drive to help pupils with special educational needs to do as well in mathematics as they do in all other areas of their learning. This example demonstrates how focused staff are on helping all pupils to do as well as possible.

The governing body keeps extremely well informed, meeting frequently with staff to discuss trends in attainment and seeking the views of the school council. A governor oversees each part of the school development plan, visiting the school regularly and

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consulting key staff. This means the governing body is in a strong position to provide support and also to hold the school to account. The effectiveness of safeguarding is good. The school adopts recommended good practice across all areas of its work and has well-developed risk assessment procedures. The school has a central role in the life of the village and promotes local community cohesion well. In supporting charities, such as Unicef and Water Aid, pupils gain valuable insights into other cultures. Staff are seeking ways in which pupils can learn about cultural diversity within the United Kingdom through first-hand experiences.

Liaison with parents and carers is exemplary and the school works very effectively to help them support their children's learning. They are made welcome and are hugely supportive. This is typified by parents' and carers' help in developing the school grounds as an excellent environment for learning. Strong partnerships with local schools enable training opportunities, otherwise too costly, and the school regularly hosts visits from teachers interested in its innovative curriculum and approach to outdoor learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy school and soon settle in due to the warm relationships adults establish with them. Good teaching channels their enthusiasm and children make good progress in all areas of their learning. Children do especially well in their personal development, which helps them throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop an eagerness to learn. They respond enthusiastically to the many opportunities for playing and learning indoors and outside in the newly-developed outdoor area. Children are attentive when working with adults and, when following their own interests, they also sustain concentration and cooperate well with one another.

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Staff keep track of children's progress systematically, identify the next steps in their learning and plan accordingly. They devise topics which engage children and provide resources which appeal to them. For example, while children took turns in making masks of the three pigs and Mr Wolf with their teacher, others were thoroughly absorbed outside, building houses with straw, sticks and real bricks, 'supervised' by those in the 'site office'.

The Early Years Foundation Stage phase leader provides outstanding leadership. She provides an excellent role model for colleagues and has transformed the provision since the last inspection, particularly the outdoor learning environment, which is used very well to enrich and extend children's learning. Children's attainment is also accelerating well. Next, she is ambitious to integrate further the Nursery and Reception classes. The highest attention is given to children's health, safety and well-being. Added to this, relationships are excellent and the partnership with parents and carers is outstanding.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers were happy overall with their children's experience at the school. They were unanimous in their opinion that the school keeps their children safe and informs them of their children's progress. All felt the teaching is good and that their children are making good progress and inspectors endorse this view. A few parents noted that their ideas and concerns are not always taken account of. Inspectors explored this and found that parents' concerns are taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lydbrook Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 137 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	27	35	73	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	33	32	67	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	48	25	52	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	38	59	62	1	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	46	26	54	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	50	23	50	1	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	33	31	67	1	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	33	29	61	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	44	26	56	1	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	56	19	39	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	45	20	42	6	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	38	28	58	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	33	32	67	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



19 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lydbrook Primary School, Lydbrook GL17 9PX

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit. You were very helpful and keen to tell us how much you enjoy being at Lydbrook Primary School. You go to an outstanding school where each one of you is cared for extremely well. You rise to the challenges given and make good progress throughout the school.

Your behaviour is outstanding and we were impressed by the way adults and children get on together. You are polite and helpful and show a great deal of respect for one another and the adults who work with you. Your school is a happy place in which to learn and you are growing up to be confident and responsible young people who contribute much to the community. You told us how your teachers are always looking for ways to make lessons interesting and you told us that one of the best things about the school is how to have fun while learning. We saw this for ourselves during the lessons we observed. What a lot of extra activities you have! It was great to see that almost all of you in Key Stage 2 attend a club and you told us how much you enjoy all the trips out of school.

It was good to see how much you contribute to helping the school run smoothly. We were surprised at how many charities you support. This shows how much you care about those less fortunate than yourselves. You gain a good understanding of life in other countries and we have suggested that you could find out more about similarities and differences between different communities in Britain.

We have also suggested that those of you who find it difficult to solve problems in mathematics could be helped to do this by making sure you read the words carefully and use what you already know about numbers to figure out what you need to do.

One of the main reasons why your school has continued to improve since it was last inspected is that all the adults work very well together. We are confident that with the positive attitudes you have to your work, you will try your hardest to help the school go from strength to strength.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector

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