

Lydbury North CofE (A) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123547
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	359463
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicky Pugh
Headteacher	Penny Knight (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, including a sample of pupils' books, teachers' planning documents, tracking and assessment data and analysed questionnaires from 24 parents, 20 pupils and four staff.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following.

- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly planning and resourcing for the outdoor curriculum, and children's typical attainment on entry.
- Outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The opportunities for pupils to understand what life is like in different communities around the country and the world.

Information about the school

This is a very small school. Children are taught in two mixed-age classes: an Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 class and a Key Stage 2 class. Children come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. All children are White British. The school was originally selected for amalgamation in 2008 and, although the decision was taken to retain the school, the period of uncertainty led to significant changes in teaching staff and a drop in the school roll. Since the spring term of 2008, the school has been led by a series of three acting headteachers. The current acting headteacher joined the school in September 2010. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and is a designated Eco 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?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

Lydbury North CoFE primary has been through a difficult period since the last inspection but is now back on track and steadily improving. The new acting headteacher, with the full and enthusiastic support of all staff and the strong support of the local authority, is maintaining the clear sense of purpose and direction of the previous leadership. The overwhelming majority of parents are very supportive of the school. One parent commented: 'In spite of all the changes and challenges our school has faced in the last couple of years, it has always been a safe, nurturing, inspiring place of learning'.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Provision has recently been significantly improved with the addition of a spacious covered outdoor area. However, the school realises that there are currently insufficient resources to allow full use of this new outdoor environment. The very small year groups, (for example, there were no Year 6 pupils in the last academic year), coupled with the very high level of mobility of pupils (only one pupil in the current Year 6 cohort started in Reception) means that it is difficult to make key stage to key stage comparisons and standards can vary significantly from year to year. Although teaching and learning are now good, a history of weaker teaching left a legacy of unsatisfactory progress for pupils in Key Stage 2. Good progress has been made in overcoming these historic gaps in pupils' learning during the last academic year, by improved teaching, a range of carefully targeted activities and a revamped curriculum. This has had a positive effect on the learning and performance of the current cohorts of pupils, although the overall progress of these pupils in Key Stage 2 has only been satisfactory. School data and lesson observations confirm that the current Year 6 cohort of five pupils are on track to achieve broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development is good. A strong moral code is implicit in the school's ethos and this is reflected in pupils' exemplary behaviour. Parents say their children enjoy coming to school and pupils agree enthusiastically, and this is reflected in their good levels of attendance. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and of the need for healthy lifestyles. The curriculum ensures that pupils receive a good variety of activities and experiences through visits, residential stays and visitors to school. Pupils particularly enjoy the wide range of activities and clubs, including physical activities. Pastoral care of pupils is good. All pupils are known as individuals whose needs are discussed and valued. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and data analysed rigorously to ensure any pupil falling behind is identified quickly and support is provided. The school has good links with groups and schools in the local area but has not done enough to develop links further afield in order to strengthen pupils' understanding of other cultures and lifestyles. The acting headteacher has developed a good understanding of how well the school is doing and what needs to be done next in a very short time. However, since the school remains under temporary leadership, it has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop children's independent learning skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage by improving resources and provision to enable children to have free access to a good range of activities in the outdoor area.
- Improve the school's contribution to community cohesion by developing pupils' appreciation of different lifestyles and cultures through developing links with schools in contrasting settings nationally and globally.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children join the school with levels of attainment broadly in line with those expected for their ages. Teachers have worked hard and successfully to ameliorate the gaps in pupils' learning resulting from disruptions to teaching when the current Year 5 and Year 6 pupils were in lower Key Stage 2. As a result, the pupils have made satisfactory progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and often very good progress in relation to their needs because of the very effective support provided by class teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies. Pupils understand what constitutes an unsafe situation and are confident that issues they raise will be dealt with promptly and effectively by the school. As one pupil said, 'We always feel safe and looked after in school.' Pupils behave very considerately towards each other and respond quickly to any additional guidance from staff about how to conduct themselves, and this makes a strong contribution to the good progress they make in lessons. They work hard and conscientiously, both independently and co-operatively, without the need for constant adult intervention. Pupils are interested in the school's health promotion strategies and understand the main threats to their health and how they can be avoided. They take on responsibility and play a constructive role in the school and, through the school council, have had some influence on decisions about school life. They recently planned improvements to the playground, for example. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn to value and respect each other in an exciting, reflective and sensitive environment. Pupils' average standards prepare them satisfactorily for the future.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
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?

Teachers assess learning carefully and provide work at the right level to match pupils' different learning needs. Pupils who need extra help are supported well and those who find learning easy are given more challenging tasks. This helps pupils to learn successfully. Good classroom management skills ensure that pupils work well together and there are no marked differences in the responses of boys or girls. In one Key Stage 2 lesson, the teacher, with strong support from her teaching assistant, used the interactive whiteboard very effectively to interest and motivate pupils and used carefully targeted questioning to draw out pupils' ideas and develop their thinking and reasoning skills. Support by teaching assistants is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. Good use is made of resources, including interactive whiteboards, to motivate pupils and enhance their learning. Clear targets are set to help pupils reach the higher standards of work. In the best cases, pupils are actively engaged in reflecting on the progress they have made in lessons and considering what it is they still need to do. The marking of pupils' work is up to date and comprehensive and, particularly in pupils' English books, usefully provides pupils with pointers for improvement to help them to take the next step in their learning.

The school provides a good curriculum which successfully meets pupils' differing needs and interests. Carefully adapted activities ensure all groups of pupils experience success and staff successfully link subjects to make learning more meaningful. Strong collaboration

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with other local schools further enriches the curriculum. The school has good and well-organised arrangements for the care of all pupils, especially for those who face particular difficulties, are troubled, or are at risk of underachieving. The family ethos throughout the school ensures that every pupil is known by all staff and valued and cared for as an individual.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is clear evidence that recent leadership has been good and has seen the school through a very difficult period, so that provision has improved and pupils have increasingly caught up on previously lost ground. In the very short time since she joined the school, the acting headteacher has communicated to the staff her high expectations about continuing to improve provision. It is too early, however, to judge the success of these initiatives. All staff work very effectively together and regularly take advantage of professional opportunities to enhance their work. Teaching is now consistently good across the school and planning is founded on robust evidence and based on good quality data. The governing body is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school. It has guided the school skilfully through a very difficult period and is fully and systematically involved in evaluating all its work. School leaders and the governing body have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and have good systems to ensure that pupils and staff are safe. The school has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers. The school promotes equality of opportunity in all its work and is constantly alert to any variation in achievement. It is proactive in devising initiatives to overcome any weaknesses. The school promotes community cohesion within its own and the local community, where it is the centre of village life. Pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own in their own country is more limited. Leaders recognise this in their plans to further develop links with schools in more urban environments and overseas.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

At the time of inspection, there were only two Reception age children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 class. They had been in school full-time for only a few weeks but had quickly settled into the classroom's routines. Teachers and support staff carefully observe and record children's achievements on a day-to-day basis and use this information effectively to plan the next steps in learning. Happy and caring relationships are quickly established. Children behave well and are enthusiastic in all that they do. They clearly enjoy school and play happily together and individually. Staff work hard to achieve a strong partnership with parents and carers. Pastoral care and welfare arrangements are good. Adults provide a wide range of interesting learning activities; in the best cases allowing children to work on things that they choose themselves as well as by taking part in more formal group activities with adults. The Early Years Foundation Stage classroom has access to a secure outdoor area that is directly accessible from the classroom and has recently gained a large covered outdoor area which allows children to be engaged in the outdoor curriculum whatever the weather. However, there are too few good quality resources to enable children to explore their learning independently in the outdoor area and this hampers the development of their independent learning skills. There is a very good focus on helping children with their speaking skills and ensuring that they develop an ability to work with others in a friendly and purposeful way. Adults have a good knowledge of the learning, development and welfare requirements of very young children and use national guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage well to support children's learning.

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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	2

Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents responded to the inspection questionnaire. All parents who responded were extremely satisfied with the school, an exceptional response reflecting the school's outstanding links with parents. All but two parents agreed with all the statements including that their child enjoys school, the teaching is good, the school is led and managed effectively, and the school makes sure that their child is well prepared for the future. Only two parents disagreed with one statement: they felt that the school does not inform them sufficiently about their child's progress. This was discussed with the school and inspection findings do not support this view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lydbury North CoFE (A) 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 inspector received 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 33 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	75	6	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	75	6	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	83	2	8	2	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	79	5	21	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	67	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	71	7	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	75	6	25	0	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)	18	75	6	25	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	83	4	17	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	67	6	25	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	67	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	71	5	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	88	3	13	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



8 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lydbury North CofE (A) Primary School, Lydbury North, SY7 8AU

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. I very much enjoyed my visit. I enjoyed watching lessons and talking to many of you.

You attend a satisfactory school and are making satisfactory progress. I found that, although some of you have not done well enough in the past, you are now catching up on previously lost ground because of the good teaching and the interesting activities you take part in every day. Your headteacher and staff care for you well and give you good support to enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They make sure that you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe. You told me that you really like your school and there are lots of things to do and enjoy. I agree with you. You work hard and try to succeed in all that you do and it is to your credit that your behaviour in and around school is excellent.

I have asked your school to do two things I think will help you make better progress and make it a better school:

- improve opportunities for outdoor activities for Reception children so that they become more confident in finding things out for themselves
- providing you with more opportunities to learn about a wider range of communities and cultures in the United Kingdom and abroad.

You can help by continuing to behave well and making sure you know, and do your very best to achieve, your targets.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis

Lead Inspector

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