

Lydiard Millicent Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126337
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	364006
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rupert Lecomber
Headteacher	Carol Dougill
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2008
School address	The Butts, Lydiard Millicent Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 3LR
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited fifteen lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and pupils; a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken with. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at: analyses of pupils' progress; development planning and monitoring; a range of policies and procedures, including those associated with safeguarding; curriculum planning documents; and a small sample of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 58 parents and carers, 118 pupils and 20 staff.

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

- The effectiveness of strategies aimed at improving attainment.
- The level of challenge in teaching and the extent to which the curriculum is promoting skills development.
- The accuracy of assessment and tracking data and how well this information is used to enhance progress.

Information about the school

Lydiard Millicent is an average-sized primary school. Around a third of the pupils travel to school from outside the school's catchment area. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The most commonly identified of these needs relate to behavioural, emotional and social, and speech, language and communication needs. A very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a very small minority speaking English as an additional language. The school holds the Eco School and Basic Skills awards and National Healthy School Status. The school is currently housed in temporary accommodation while it is being rebuilt. The new building is expected to be opened towards the end of 2011.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Lydiard Millicent is a good school. All aspects of the school's work are at least good, with some being outstanding. In particular, the systems now in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are of exceptionally high quality. They provide staff with an excellent picture of how well pupils are progressing so that they can intervene swiftly when progress slows. Over the past year this has allowed staff to address weaker aspects of pupils' learning well, halting the decline in attainment so that it is now rising rapidly. By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average. Attainment in writing is not as good as in reading and this is a current improvement priority, especially through helping boys to attain as well as girls in this aspect.

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In the past, the quality of teaching was affected by a number of staff changes and lengthy absences, limiting the rate of progress, an aspect which concerned a few parents and carers. However, the systems now in place ensure that teaching is uniformly good and lessons provide challenging activities, well matched to the different levels at which pupils are working. During the inspection, there was a small number of occasions when a few pupils were allowed to go on talking when they should have been working. Pupils are well looked after in school and pastoral support is good so, by the time they leave, they are very mature and thoughtful young people. Alongside this, older pupils' exceptional skills at assessing their own work and setting themselves new targets for improvement is one of the reasons they are especially well prepared for their move to secondary school.

The headteacher and senior staff drive forward improvement well, with the Early Years Foundation Stage leader playing a leading role in adapting provision to meet children's changing needs. Governance is outstanding. The governing body is especially skilled in supporting monitoring and improvement work, and its management of the new building project, including the excellent consultation with all stakeholders, is of exceptionally high quality. The school monitors the impact of its provision on pupils' progress well so that development planning accurately targets weaker aspects of its work. Teamwork among all staff is good and there is a strong commitment to continue building on the good

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improvement made over the past year. These strengths give confidence that the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise progress and attainment in writing, especially for boys, by creating more opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing and for different purposes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment on entry is slightly below average due to weaker social and literacy skills. Reception children make good progress and the attainment of the large majority is above average. Last year, attainment in the national tests declined due to past weaknesses in teaching and assessment, although strategies put in place during the year saw pupils starting to catch up. Progress, including in the development of important literacy and numeracy skills, is good with attainment well on the way to regaining the significantly above average levels seen in previous years. In all phases of the school, pupils achieve well, including if they have special educational needs and/or disabilities or if they are higher attainers.

Younger pupils' calculation skills are good and effective use of adjectives and adverbs enlivens their written work. Their reading and writing skills are aided considerably by very well-planned themes like that of 'The Fire of London'. For example, pupils confidently wrote glossaries for their own topic books. These skills are built on well through Years 3 to 6. By Year 6, good presentation and careful calculation help pupils attain well in mathematics. Their good writing skills are seen, for example in the way they can make a very persuasive argument. Good investigative skills help pupils understand science concepts such as irreversible change well.

Older pupils are exceptionally skilled at using information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning, for example, using a considerable range of different techniques and media to present their work. This, together with excellent enterprise opportunities based on a popular television programme, helps prepare pupils especially well for their futures.

Strengths in pupils' personal development are evident in their good behaviour and the mature way in which they carry out responsibilities, for example, as school councillors or prefects. Pupils' very positive attitudes are evident in the great enthusiasm they show in their activities, although occasionally this results in the noise levels rising, especially in the younger classes. Through their commitment to sport and excellent awareness of how to behave close to the building site, pupils exhibit an outstanding awareness of how to live healthy and safe lifestyles. They gain good spiritual awareness, especially through links with the local church. They have a good awareness of global issues, although opportunities to learn about other cultures are more limited.

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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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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?

Provision supports learning well, exceptionally so with regard to assessment which has led to effective intervention programmes for supporting pupils who need extra help. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive and virtually all pupils, and their parents and carers are totally confident that pupils are safe and well cared for in school. This is a significant strength at a time when building work is going on adjacent to the temporary classrooms. Procedures for the induction of new pupils and for those moving on to a new class are good so pupils settle quickly and progress well.

Strengths in teaching are consistently seen in all classes. The most significant of these is the outstanding way in which staff use assessment to support pupils' progress. Clear information about the learning objectives for each lesson and regular checks on pupils' progress throughout activities help them to do well. Individual targets are constantly referred to so all pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve, a strength that they quickly develop themselves. Lessons are thoroughly evaluated and future planning is very well adjusted. The curriculum helps staff to plan very exciting activities, for example, with regard to 'the homeless person who sneaked into their classroom one night because he had nowhere else to go'. Learning is extremely relevant and purposeful such as in the Year 6 topic on Antarctica where pupils designed clothing and planned meals for living in an extremely cold climate.

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The recently developed advice for pupils to build on and extend their skills is beginning to support their progress well. During the inspection, some outstanding lessons were observed where pupils were full of excitement, hardly being able to wait to get on with their work. A good example is where pupils designed their own island and used coordinates for directions to different points of interest. However, on a small minority of occasions, staff let the noise levels get too loud which limit pupils' concentration.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

The headteacher has been instrumental in introducing a curriculum for the 21st century which has helped raise the rate of progress and ensure that pupils develop a thirst for learning and are exceptionally well prepared for the future. The deputy headteacher and other senior staff support her very well. Staff changes and absences have limited the contribution by some subject leaders, with the school very wisely setting out a rolling improvement programme to accommodate this. Very effective staff appointments have strengthened the quality of teaching and leadership so that the staff team shares a common vision and determination to continue building on the good improvements made over the last year. Their effectiveness is clearly evident in the meticulous analysis of assessment data to pinpoint the exact areas of weakness that limit attainment. The governing body is extremely skilled and knowledgeable, providing exactly the right level of support and challenge for the school.

Relationships throughout the whole school community are very good so that there is an absence of racial discrimination and pupils' equality of opportunity is good. As a result, all achieve equally well. Partnerships with parents and carers, and the local community support pupils' learning and welfare well and those parents spoken with feel very welcome in school, confident that they are fully included in school life. Through rigorous policies and procedures, the school makes sure pupils are safe and free from harm at all times, with excellent arrangements in place with regard to the building site. The governing body is already planning to tighten procedures further when the new building is completed. Community cohesion within the school and the local area is promoted well, with the global dimension is enhanced by links with schools in other countries such as France. A thorough analysis has identified increasing pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural aspect of the wider world as the next area for development.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to their education because the provision closely meets their needs. Although some staff absences have limited improvements in recent years, which has led to progress slowing, this situation is firmly in the past. The current leader is exceptionally skilled at adapting provision to meet children's emerging skills and needs. For example, excellent behaviour management helps children to concentrate and behave well in lessons. The programme for learning the letter sounds is excellent and is already beginning to compensate well for children's lower level literacy skills on entry. Relationships between staff and parents and carers are exceptionally good and parents and carers praise the induction procedures.

As with the rest of the school, the curriculum has been adapted well to make learning relevant and very interesting. There is a good range of highly stimulating activities across all areas of learning, both indoors and out. Children have many opportunities to develop independence and find out things for themselves. They are becoming skilled at choosing their own resources and judging when there are too many pupils for an activity and waiting their turn. Adults work very well together, providing effective opportunities for focused learning in important areas such as literacy and numeracy. Current strategies to ensure boys enjoy writing and make the progress they should work well in activities such as 'writing a party shopping list' for Spencer Bear's birthday, although the full effect on their attainment is not yet apparent.

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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	1

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire have positive views of the school. They are totally confident that their children are safe there and are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. They also agree that their children are happy in school, praise the quality of teaching and leadership and management and feel their children are well prepared for the future. Inspectors endorse these views.

Of most concern to a small minority was the progress their children are making. A few also felt their children's needs were not met and parents and carers were not supported to help their children's learning. Inspectors found that, while in the past the progress of some pupils slowed, it is now good and their needs are met well. Inspectors judge the quality of information provided for parents and carers to support their children's learning to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lydiard Millicent Voluntary Controlled Primary School 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	64	18	31	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	72	16	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	30	52	21	36	5	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	41	22	38	9	16	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	34	59	16	28	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	48	20	34	7	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	53	26	45	1	2	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)	22	38	25	43	4	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	47	20	34	6	10	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	55	17	29	1	2	4	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	41	25	43	2	3	4	7
The school is led and managed effectively	33	57	20	34	3	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	60	18	31	5	9	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.



11 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lydiard Millicent Church of England Primary School, Swindon SN5 3LR

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their time to talk to us. We think your school is good and are delighted that you and your parents and carers agree.

Here are some of the things we found were especially good about the school.

- You make good progress and attainment is above average by the end of Year 6.
- You very much enjoy school and attendance levels are high.
- Teaching is good and you have an interesting curriculum that helps you to do well.
- Staff look after you well. You feel very safe in school and have an excellent awareness of how to live healthy and safe lifestyles.
- The way staff assess your work and track your progress is excellent. Those of you in the older classes are exceptionally good at assessing how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve. This is one reason why you are especially well prepared for moving on to secondary school.
- The governing body gives excellent support to the school and has been exceptionally good in planning for the new building.
- Your headteacher and staff have been very successful in improving lots of things in the school and are continuing to make things even better.

Here are some of the things we think the school could improve.

- We would like staff to help you become as good at writing as you are at reading.
- In some of the lessons a few of you talk when you should be listening or working. We have asked staff to make sure you do not do this. You can help by concentrating and working hard all the time.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson

Lead inspector

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