

Ludwell Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126271
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	360033
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alyson Mathie
Headteacher	Suzanne Evans
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons or parts of lessons and observed three teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils and they spoke to a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures including those associated with safeguarding, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. They scrutinised questionnaires returned by 40 parents and carers, 49 pupils and six staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- The extent to which current provision is making up for past weaknesses, especially with regard to English.
- Whether there are inconsistencies in the rate of progress made by boys or girls and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How effectively staff and the governing body support the headteacher's drive for improvement.
- How well pupils develop an understanding of the diversity in society beyond the local area.

Information about the school

Ludwell is a small village school in which pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, significantly so in some year groups. These pupils' needs mainly relate to specific learning, behavioural, emotional and social needs and speech, language and communication needs. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. An above average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than in Reception or Year 6. There have been a considerable number of staff changes during the last few years. The headteacher took up her post in September 2009.

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

Ludwell Community Primary is a satisfactory school. In previous years, progress slowed and attainment declined, partly due to constant staff changes and some inadequate teaching. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, rapid improvement has been made. Pupils' progress and their attainment are improving well. Staff take better account of individual pupils' needs, with new assessment and tracking systems allowing swifter intervention when progress slows. As a result, there is no significant difference in boys' or girls' progress, or in the progress of vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their attainment is broadly average. Numeracy and reading skills have improved, with a higher proportion of pupils than nationally reaching average levels by Year 2. Older pupils are improving in these areas although the full effect is not seen in attainment at Year 6. Although weaknesses in writing are beginning to be tackled successfully, handwriting, punctuation and spelling are still weak.

Good provision in the youngest class helps reception children to achieve well. In other year groups curriculum planning takes account of the need to build on and extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, making it much easier for staff to plan activities that enhance pupils' progress. The employment of a skilled teacher in the oldest class, together with rigorous monitoring and support of teaching has led to considerable improvement. Teaching and learning are however satisfactory because pupils are still having to catch up as the result of inadequate learning in the past. Pupils are well cared for due to the rigorous attention paid to their safety and welfare. Staff know pupils well, which together with better information on pupils' needs, ensures support and guidance is good. This is partly why pupils do well in their personal development. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school and is praised by visitors and other schools and organisations. Pupils' awareness of how to live healthy and safe lifestyles is good. They are extremely friendly, helpful and supportive of one another and contribute well to the school and wider community. The school has been extremely successful in promoting pupils' respect and empathy for people from different social, religious and cultural backgrounds. Pupils' sense of fairness and tolerance is exemplary, demonstrating that, despite the school being in a largely monocultural area with limited opportunities for links with diverse communities, community cohesion is promoted well.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and some aspects of leadership and management are good. For example, the good partnership with other schools and organisations, and the effective engagement with parents and carers support pupils' welfare and learning well. Effective teamwork helps staff and the governing body increasingly support the drive for improvement. This has been enhanced by improved monitoring systems which provide accurate self-evaluation, clearly identifying weaknesses in provision that remain. Development planning effectively targets these although some,

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notably in writing, are still to be fully addressed. Pupils' progress is regularly and rigorously checked so it is clear when they need extra support or challenge. This provides an accurate picture of how different groups of pupils are doing. However, less has been done to assess the impact of the different strategies used to promote greater progress. Evidence of the school's success in addressing a number of weaknesses and the commitment to tackling those that remain give confidence that its capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and attainment in writing through:
 - focusing more on developing presentational skills, especially those associated with handwriting and punctuation
 - extending pupils' awareness of the sound patterns in different words in order to help pupils to spell accurately.
- Make better use of assessment information in evaluating the impact of intervention programmes on pupils' progress so that these can be regularly adjusted where necessary.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment on entry is broadly average. Reception children achieve well across all areas of learning. Progress across Years 1 and 2 is mainly satisfactory. It is good in reading as the result of the effective programme for learning the sounds in words. In the older year groups, unsatisfactory teaching in the past slowed progress and prevented pupils from gaining the literacy and numeracy skills expected for their age. Attainment by Year 6 fell to below average, but improvement last year is helping pupils begin to catch up. Good mathematics teaching has meant pupils are confident at calculation, including when using fractions or negative numbers. They are secure at handling data and using measures. Reading continues to be the stronger aspect of English, but insecure teaching in past years has resulted in weaknesses in some writing skills. Last year, pupils made good gains in writing effectively for a range of purposes and using their imaginative ideas to engage the reader. However, weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and handwriting spoil their work and limit attainment levels.

Pupils very much enjoy coming to school and develop a thirst for learning. Improved provision has helped attendance levels rise to above average. Pupils feel very safe in school, learn to do their own risk assessments and know adults always look out for them. Pupils' contribution to school life as councillors or playground buddies supports this well. Their contribution to the wider community is good, for example in supporting ecology, the cluster schools parliament and a range of charities both here and overseas. Pupils are very committed to regular exercise and healthy eating. They work well independently and in teams which, together with their improving literacy and numeracy skills, prepare them satisfactorily for the future. Links with the local church and very good assemblies support pupils' good spiritual awareness. Topics like Our World help them to gain a good understanding of some different religions and cultures, in the latter tasting the food being a very popular aspect. Pupils' sense of fair play and interest in the wider world supports this.

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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	3
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?

Over the past year, there has been considerable improvement in the school's provision for pupils. Previous weaknesses have now been eradicated, most notably in the quality of teaching and learning. Planning is much more focused on building on and extending pupils' skills and understanding so that they acquire these at an increasingly good rate although past inadequacies have limited the impact on attainment.

Pupils are now clear on what they are expected to achieve in each lesson and work is well marked to identify when they have done so. Older pupils are increasingly good at doing this themselves although it is less well established in younger year groups. Different activities support and challenge each pupil well and during lessons teachers and teaching assistants are good at encouraging pupils to move on to new targets. This was exceptionally well done in an excellent Years 2 and 3 mathematics lesson. However, staff sometimes miss opportunities to set out a range of targets at the start of the lesson so pupils themselves recognise how they can achieve even more. Many of the systems and procedures for assessing and evaluating pupils' progress are new and this was checked less regularly in the past. Although the situation is now being reversed, more needs to be done in this aspect, especially with regard to identifying the most successful strategies for supporting progress.

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The school enjoys a good reputation for the quality of its exciting and stimulating curriculum and environment. Better use is now being made of this to enhance important skills. For example, the outstanding introduction to an activity on Quest Stories saw pupils' language skills develop exceptionally well. However, the emphasis on supporting presentation and spelling skills is not as good. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is a strength. Induction and transfer arrangements are good, as are procedures for encouraging good attendance. Liaison with parents and carers and other agencies to support pupils, especially the most vulnerable, is good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

In this small school, all staff are leaders and managers and they work well together as a team, increasingly taking on monitoring activities and sharing expertise which has led to improvements in teaching and learning. Benefitting from the headteacher's very skilled analysis of what needed to be done, staff are better involved in supporting self-evaluation and the drive for improvement. Staff and the governing body are clear as to the role they can play in addressing remaining weaknesses. Their commitment to individual pupils is evident in the fact that any discrimination is tackled effectively and that provision ensures equality of opportunity. The governing body holds the school to account in all its work and helps ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are rigorous and effective. The governing body supports the school's work in a number of areas, for example by promoting community cohesion well. There is a determination to improve this good aspect further, with pupils now exchanging information with a London school whose pupils have more diverse backgrounds.

Relationships with parents and carers are very good. They are very supportive of the school, being keen to help their children's work at home and helping to raise attainment in reading. A number of community visitors regularly hear pupils read as well. Links with other schools and agencies are well established, supporting learning for vulnerable and talented pupils well and enhancing sports activities.

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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	3
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	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

This aspect of the school's work benefits from effective planning, systems and procedures. Good induction arrangements and very positive relationships with parents and carers help children settle well and enjoy school. Year 1 pupils who are also in the class are very supportive and friendly, providing excellent role models for reception children, especially in behaviour which is outstanding.

Relationships between adults and children are excellent. Learning is practical and great fun so that children acquire skills and knowledge at a good rate. Activities are always relevant to children's interests so they join in enthusiastically. For example, children themselves designed the role-play area as a pet shop, carefully selecting the resources. Adults are very skilled at asking questions that help children discover things for themselves. Children are very keen to do this, for example finding out whether the sun's rays will help their glue to dry more quickly. Children develop a good range of literacy and numeracy skills and their personal development is good. They get on very well together, for example when using construction equipment to design and build a garage for the wheeled toys, confidently telling the inspector, 'It needs to be a big one.' Good teaching ensures that children learn well throughout all their activities. For example, before they go to lunch each child has to solve a problem well matched to their ability. Children love writing, producing their own books and writing in sentences that flow in sequence. Regular and effective assessment ensures planning builds well on previous learning.

The accommodation, both indoors and out, is used well to promote learning although the outdoor area has a hard surface and no cover for its use in inclement weather which limit some activities. Teaching staff provide effective support for the new class teacher so provision is well led and managed.

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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 very large majority of parents and carers have positive views about the school. Typical comments on the questionnaires and from those spoken to were, 'an amazing or fantastic school'. The overwhelming number of parents and carers who responded are happy with the school. What most pleases them is the way their children are prepared for the future. They agree children enjoy school and are also pleased with regard to the quality of teaching, the way their children are kept safe and how unacceptable behaviour is dealt with. A number of parents and carers wrote in praise of the headteacher and staff.

Inspection evidence shows that pupils do enjoy school, behave exceptionally well and are kept safe and free from harm. It also indicates that the headteacher and staff have a good relationship with most parents and carers and respond well to their concerns, an aspect which was the least favourable on the questionnaires. During the inspection, teaching was good and occasionally excellent, but it has not been as good in the past so pupils' progress slowed. This is the main reason why pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the future. The good teaching seen now helps to improve this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ludwell Community 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 66 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	73	10	25	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	78	8	20	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	65	11	28	3	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	73	9	23	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	83	6	15	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	70	9	23	3	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	55	16	40	2	5	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)	24	60	14	35	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	65	12	30	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	63	14	35	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	60	11	28	4	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	68	10	25	3	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	75	9	23	1	3	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.



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ludwell Community Primary School, Shaftesbury SP7 9ND

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 satisfactory, but it is now improving quickly and some things are good already.

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

- We are impressed by your excellent behaviour. We think you are friendly and helpful young people who do a lot in your school and the local area.
- You are making better progress and attainment is improving. Reception children do well and Year 2 pupils attain well in reading.
- Teaching and learning have improved and staff plan interesting activities which help you to learn more quickly.
- Adults take good care of you. You know a lot about how to keep healthy and safe and almost all of you attend school regularly.
- You are finding out a lot about how people in different communities live, including some overseas.
- Your headteacher, staff and the governing body work well with your parents and carers and other schools and organisations to improve your education, and are continuing to do so.

Here are some of the things we have asked the school to improve:

- You are now doing better in reading and mathematics and we have asked staff to help you do as well in writing, particularly through improving handwriting, punctuation and spelling. You can help by trying as hard at these as you do to write in an interesting way.
- We have also asked staff to keep a close check on the special programmes they use to help you catch up so that they can identify which ones work the best.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson

Lead inspector

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