

Longlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101429
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	354995
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2011
Reporting inspector	David Shepherd

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	MWC Chambers
Headteacher	Fiona Dear
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 14 lessons led by 11 different teachers. Meetings were held with the senior staff, a group of pupils and two members of the governing body, including the Chair. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation and the school's analysis of its data. Questionnaires from 124 parents and carers, 15 staff and 94 pupils were received and analysed.

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

- Why the achievement of middle-ability pupils in Key Stage 2 appears to be lower than average in mathematics.
- Why boys appear not to attain as highly as girls in writing.
- To what extent the strategies used for assessing pupils' progress lead to improved outcomes.
- How monitoring carried out by senior and middle leaders impacts on pupils' progress and attainment.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools and draws its pupils from the local area. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Their main needs are moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. A lower-than-average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Reception classes. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award. The school took part in the pilot single level tests at the end of Year 6 in 2010. There is a privately run after-school club on site which is subject to a separate inspection.

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

Longlands Primary School provides a satisfactory education. Pupils make satisfactory progress because the teaching is satisfactory overall. There are some good features in the school's work. In particular, good care, guidance and support mean that pupils enjoy school, feel safe, behave well, get on well together, lead healthy lifestyles and play a significant part in enabling the school to run smoothly.

Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average, but higher in reading and mathematics than in writing. This is because boys typically reach lower levels of attainment in writing compared to reading and mathematics. The contexts of writing do not always appeal to boys because they do not have enough opportunities for non-fiction writing and consequently they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they receive considerable additional support.

A notable feature of lessons is the consistently good relationships between pupils and adults. As a result, pupils try hard to please staff. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good guidance and support for pupils in their groups during lessons. However, teachers do not always share their expectations with pupils of different levels of ability during lessons. Marking is encouraging but does not always provide enough guidance for pupils and, where next steps are indicated, pupils are not always given enough time to respond to the suggestions made especially in mathematics. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of visitors to the school and visits to places of interest but pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is shared by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. Senior staff and middle leaders are gaining the skills necessary to carry out their roles, but have not yet had a strong enough impact on learning. The school's improvement plans indicate how provision is to be improved, but these are too detailed and do not focus enough on the key areas linked to improving outcomes for pupils. Monitoring of the impact of the school's strategies on pupils' learning is at an early stage. The governing body is keen and supportive but has had limited success in providing the school with the challenge necessary to aid improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This underpins the school's satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

Up to 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.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, raise the attainment of boys in writing so that it is nearer to that of girls by:
 - increasing the proportion of non-fiction writing
 - providing pupils with regular opportunities to consolidate and extend their writing skills in different subjects.
- By April 2012, improve the quality and consistency of teaching and assessment so that at least 80% of lessons are good or better, by:
 - indicating to pupils at different levels of ability what they are expected to learn by the end of lessons
 - ensuring that marking always indicates the next steps in pupils' learning, and providing pupils with opportunities to correct their mistakes, especially in mathematics.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation by senior and middle leaders lead to accelerating progress and rising attainment by:
 - devising and implementing plans that focus sharply on the key actions to raise attainment
 - checking on pupil progress more regularly and providing more guidance to teachers on how they can accelerate learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children start school with skills that are broadly as expected for their age. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The standards seen in lessons and books were broadly average. There are signs of improvement in Years 5 and 6 where pupils are making faster progress than elsewhere in the school. Pupils enjoy their work and settle down to it quickly. For example, in Year 6 pupils worked industriously when writing an explanation about day and night and the four seasons. Pupils in Year 5 were eager to respond to the challenges set for them when converting fractions to decimals. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls in reading and mathematics but boys attain much lower levels than girls in writing. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given suitable focused language support to ensure they progress at the same rate as their classmates. ♦

Pupils know about healthy foods and the importance of exercise. They enjoy physical activities in lessons and at playtimes and those taking place out of school hours. The responses on these topics in pupils' questionnaires indicate the positive impact of achieving Healthy Schools status and the Activemark. Pupils behaved well in the lessons seen, and sometimes their behaviour was exemplary. However, a few pupils mentioned in their questionnaires that on occasions behaviour is not always good. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community. For example, Year 6 pupils act as monitors in the library and meet and greet visitors on open days. Some act as house captains and house vice-captains and hold meetings with their houses to encourage house members to do their best. Pupils helped to design the attractive school garden and suggested placing

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attractive waste bins in the playgrounds. They have raised money for a range of charities at home and abroad. Elected pupils represent their peers on the school council. Pupils reflect thoughtfully upon some of the broader issues in life, such as friendship. They have a good sense of fairness and know the correct way to behave. They learn about aspects of other cultures but their understanding of different religious beliefs and ways of life is not so well developed. Attendance is improving and is average.

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	2
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	3
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 plan lessons that captivate and interest pupils. For example, during an English lesson, Year 6 pupils were motivated by the lesson material and keen to write about how rain falls. The purpose of lessons is planned but this does not always include what pupils at different levels of ability are expected to achieve in lessons. This slows the progress pupils make, especially of middle-ability and the more-able pupils, because suitable challenges are not consistently being set, particularly in mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities satisfactorily on an individual and/or group basis. This additional teaching helps them to make satisfactory progress. Teachers include encouraging comments when marking work, especially in writing, but pupils do not receive enough guidance about their next steps in learning, especially in mathematics. ◆◆◆

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Provision to promote pupils' personal development is included effectively throughout the curriculum. Enrichment activities, particularly in sports and instrumental music tuition, are varied and visits to places of interest and visitors to the school are popular with pupils. One parent said, 'My child enjoys sports, which the school promotes, and there are lots of opportunities to play in a competitive environment.' However, pupils' writing skills are not developed regularly enough in subjects such as history, geography and religious education and this prevents pupils from making quicker progress.

Good arrangements for pupils joining the school ensure that they settle quickly. In replies to their questionnaire, most pupils responded that they were well looked after by the staff. One parent said, 'I cannot praise the school enough for the support they give my daughter.' Procedures for promoting attendance are satisfactory. Transition arrangements are good from Reception to Year 1 and satisfactory from Year 6 to secondary school.

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?

The headteacher, with the support of senior leaders, has developed a clear vision for the school. Nevertheless, this is not always shared effectively with all staff. The school identifies appropriately the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning. These are then incorporated into plans to improve provision. However, plans do not focus on pupil outcomes sharply enough and this makes it difficult to evaluate regularly their impact on pupils' learning, which limits their effectiveness. Data are analysed satisfactorily but lessons learned from this analysis are not always included effectively enough in school planning and at times insufficient guidance is given to staff on how they can accelerate learning. ♦

The school has a generally positive relationship with parents and carers. As one parent wrote, 'The school and the staff are exceptionally good and always very helpful and considerate.' Initiatives such as the annual surveys of parents and carers, focus groups for parents and carers, open afternoons, structured conversations with parents and carers and pupils' reading logs all help to promote this positive relationship. Parents and carers are invited into school on a number of occasions, such as for parents' evenings and school productions. However, a few parents and carers are less satisfied with some aspects of the school's work, such as the rate at which their children are making progress.

Links with the local authority, medical services and local schools help to promote effectively the personal development and well-being of pupils. These partnerships contribute to improving provision, but their impact on learning has not been evaluated.

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Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is ambitious for the school to do well, is supportive and shows high levels of commitment to the school. However, it does not always provide enough challenge to make a significant contribution to improvements. Safeguarding procedures are good. The site is safe and secure, and all staff are rigorously vetted and trained regularly in child protection procedures.

The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. The school tackles any racist behaviour and discrimination effectively. It provides appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities but the academic needs of boys are not always met. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their local community and a growing understanding of the wider national and international communities.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children receive a satisfactory start to their schooling. They make satisfactory progress overall, but it is fastest in personal, social and emotional development and slowest in writing. Children enjoy their learning and work well independently. They are looked after well and are kept safe. They are given good opportunities to chat to adults about what they are doing. They practise the sounds letters make, and they read, write, count and play with toys and other equipment. However, planning does not focus enough on tackling the weaknesses in writing that are reflected in pupils' work further up the school.

Behaviour is good and children get on well with each other and adults. The learning environment is stimulating and well organised inside and outside. It provides children with an enjoyable range of activities. Staff work well together as a team. They are developing a good understanding about provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's progress is monitored and recorded systematically. Portfolios of children's achievements

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are kept and these are appreciated by parents and carers. Links with parents and carers are good. Induction procedures are good and children quickly settle into school routines.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The response rate from parents and carers to the questionnaire was average. Their views were largely positive. Approximately one third of the questionnaires returned included written comments and many of these were critical of the school. Nonetheless, parents and carers felt that the school keeps them informed about their children's progress. They also felt their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe and helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle. One parent wrote, 'The school promotes a warm, friendly and supportive environment in which my child can develop at her own pace.' ♦

A few parents and carers wrote that behaviour is not managed well enough, especially at lunchtimes. There were concerns also about the school not helping them to support their children's learning and that their children were not making enough progress. A further general concern was that the school does not take their suggestions into account. The inspection found that behaviour was managed well during the inspection, including at lunchtimes. The school pointed out that parents and carers are informed about the topics being taught in each class every term, homework sheets include guidance to help them and annual open afternoons give them opportunities to see their children at work. In addition, curriculum evenings are held for parents and carers of pupils starting in Year 3 that outline any changes from Year 2. The school pointed out that parents and carers have opportunities to make their views known to the school and that their views are taken seriously. ♦♦♦

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Longlands 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 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 313 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	51	58	47	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	63	51	56	45	3	2	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	32	72	58	8	6	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	65	63	51	13	10	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	44	35	67	54	10	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	59	65	52	21	17	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	31	74	60	9	7	2	2
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)	31	25	60	48	11	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	28	69	56	15	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	24	65	52	12	10	11	9
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	26	60	48	19	15	5	4
The school is led and managed effectively	37	30	63	51	10	8	8	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	40	60	48	9	7	2	2

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



18 March 2011



Dear Pupils



Inspection of Longlands Primary School, Sidcup DA15 7JG



Thank you for making inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. You go to a satisfactory school, where adults work hard to prepare you for the future. Here are some of the best things we found.

- You enjoy school and get on really well with each other.
- You feel safe and know the importance of eating healthy foods and taking exercise.
- You particularly like the sports clubs and the opportunities you have to play musical instruments.
- You like your teachers and teaching assistants and try your best to please them.
- You are well behaved and make a good contribution to the school.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants look after you well.



We have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do three things to make your school better:

- provide you with more opportunities to write in different subjects to help boys in particular to improve their writing
- let you know what you are expected to learn by the end of each lesson, how well you have done and give you time to carry out the improvements suggested in marking
- check on how well you are learning and make plans to help you learn even quicker.



All of you can help by continuing to work very hard.



Yours sincerely



David Shepherd
Lead inspector

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