

Lea CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116892
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	358048
Inspection dates	29–30 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Fiona Arnison

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	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Cross
Headteacher	Linda Townsend
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed seven members of the teaching staff. They held meetings with the headteacher, representatives from the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. The school's work was observed and various documents, including a range of self-evaluation documentation, the school's development plan, progress reports, minutes of governing body meetings, pupils' books and records of pupils' progress, were scrutinised. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from 34 parents and carers and took account of 14 staff questionnaires.

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

- How effective are the school's systems for quickly identifying and effectively addressing potential underachievement?
- What has been the impact of recent consultant support to improve the teaching of writing?
- What is the school doing to improve attendance, and what difference has this made?

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. All of the pupils are of White British heritage. Fewer pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, although none of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and is an Eco-school.

The school operates a daily breakfast club and after-school club. Lea Pre-school, a privately run provision, also operates on the school site, but did not form part of this inspection. At the time of the inspection a new building, The Lodge, was under construction in the school grounds. This will provide a permanent base for the pre-school and for other extended services.

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

This is a good school. It is a safe, happy and harmonious place, where pupils thoroughly enjoy their education. Parents and carers are quick to praise the school, saying 'this is a brilliant school' and 'my son would be there at weekends if he had his way'. Keeping pupils safe from harm is central to the school's values, and permeates all aspects of school life. As a result, the extent to which pupils feel safe is outstanding. Behaviour is also outstanding, because pupils themselves are well motivated to behave. One parent summed this up by saying, 'Discipline is not forced on the children. They just behave because they are happy, respectful and stimulated'.

The school's leaders and managers have demonstrated a good capacity to improve. They know their school well. Self-evaluation is accurate and the actions for school improvement are clearly focused on making a difference. For example, local authority consultants have recently worked alongside the teachers to improve the teaching of writing. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved in writing and also in other subjects, and is now consistently good. However, few outstanding lessons were observed during the inspection. The best examples of teacher's marking are detailed and thorough, although pupils are not routinely given opportunities to respond to the comments in their books. The progress that pupils make is good. The curriculum is relevant and motivating to the pupils. It extends their understanding and enjoyment of learning through a wide range of enrichment activities. Although attainment has been broadly average in recent years, work in the current Year 6 pupils' books is above the national average.

Attendance is only average. This is mainly because of the large number of pupils who are taken on holidays during term time. Additionally, some pupils' attendance is not good enough and this limits their progress. The school's leaders and governing body are working with the local authority to find an acceptable way to improve matters, but it is too early to see the impact of their collaboration.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the large majority of pupils attain above expected levels by:
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching
 - ensuring that the existing good practice in marking is consistent across the school, so that pupils know precisely what they have to do to improve.
- Improve attendance to 96% by April 2012 by implementing procedures agreed with the local authority to reduce term-time holidays.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with standards that are below those normally expected for their age. They make good progress over time and leave Year 6 with standards that have been broadly average in recent years. This is because they work hard in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. Teachers plan exciting activities, but also make sure that the basic skills are securely taught. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, the eight pupils thoroughly enjoyed their drama work based on a performance poem; so much so that the carefully woven-in practice for their approaching national reading tests was almost incidental. Attainment is accurately assessed, and pupil progress is carefully monitored. Individual tracking records are scrutinised to ensure that swift and pertinent action is taken in the event of potential underachievement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in line with their classmates. This is because of the well-tailored interventions and support they receive.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They support each other extremely well in lessons, finding ways to make sure that their classmates' learning continues uninterrupted. For example, when several pupils simultaneously needed help working on the computers, their peers helped them without waiting to be prompted. On the playground, they resolve any minor disputes amicably. At the end of playtime, pupils were observed encouraging each other to hang their coats up tidily and get to lessons promptly.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Apart from diet, they know that exercise is essential. Most take advantage of the many sports opportunities that the school offers. Eco-school status shapes pupils' attitudes in responsibly caring for the planet. Older pupils enjoy helping out around the school, for example at lunch times, and running the school stationery store. They recognise that they have a say in the life of the school. Recently they voted for their preferred new playground equipment, which was purchased through their parents' and carers' fundraising. The 'action group' know that they make a difference to local issues, such as the recent 'save our forest' campaign. Pupils speak with compassion about the school's sponsored children in India. They recognise how their actions make a difference to the lives of others. The church school ethos is implicit in the school's work, and pupils' spiritual development is good. The extent to which pupils develop workplace skills is currently satisfactory, given that their attendance and overall attainment are average.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	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?

Teaching is good. In the best lessons, expectations are high and the pace is brisk. Activities are well matched to pupils' starting points, because every pupil is known as an individual. For example, in a science lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 thoroughly enjoyed comparing thermometer readings from two different beakers of warm water, to see which one cooled the faster. Each pupil then plotted their results successfully onto graphs of differing complexity. Assessment of pupils' work is accurate, and is used effectively to plan for the next steps in learning. Teachers usually mark pupils' work conscientiously, and older pupils especially receive some detailed feedback. However, this good practice is not yet consistent across the whole school. Pupils do not always take account of teacher's written comments. As a result, they are not always clear how they can improve their work.

Senior leaders have recently introduced a skills-based approach to improve the school's curriculum. Pupils enjoy making links in their learning through broad topics such as 'Water' or 'Growth'. There are many trips and visits to enhance their classroom learning. All pupils learn Italian, and benefit from specialist instruction for both information and communications technology (ICT) and sports and physical education. Everyone plays the recorder, and a quarter of the pupils learn other musical instruments. There is a wide range of after-school clubs which are well attended.

Clearly targeted care, guidance and support make a difference to the self-esteem and confidence of many pupils. As a result, they achieve well and have positive attitudes to

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their learning. Teaching assistants play a key role in making sure that all pupils are safe and well looked after. The school supports individual pupils and their families, for example by enabling them to attend particular clubs and activities, where it would benefit their learning or well-being. The school's breakfast and after-school clubs are much appreciated by parents and pupils alike, and contribute to the good care, guidance and support that the school provides for its pupils.

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?

Senior leaders have high expectations, which they communicate effectively to staff. They routinely make use of a range of monitoring activities and, as a result, have a very accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Key weaknesses have been tackled successfully and the school is now building on its strengths. Leaders are ambitious to continue the school's recent improvements to classroom practice. The recent appointment of an assistant headteacher has enabled some of the leadership workload to be delegated effectively. The good governing body has achieved a careful balance of challenge and support, respecting professional boundaries within a close-knit village community. Governors are rigorous in ensuring that both pupils and staff are kept safe. Clear channels exist for parents and carers to share their views with the governing body, for example through regular surveys.

The school works hard to reach all parents and carers. Detailed annual reports are produced, and parents and carers are given opportunities to discuss these with teachers. Information sessions help them to support their child's learning in reading and mathematics. A recent parents' and carers' workshop to review the sex and relationships policy was well attended. Partnership working supports those pupils whose family circumstances make them vulnerable to underachievement. The school works effectively with outside agencies. Safeguarding procedures are effective and rigorously enforced, as seen in the watchful eye kept on pupils' well-being throughout their time at the school. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and gaps in performance, for example between pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have narrowed. The school has good systems for effective community cohesion which develop pupils' understanding of groups different from their own. For instance, younger pupils have a partnership with an infant school in Gloucester, and older pupils have pen friends in Uganda. Cohesion within the local community is particularly good, and the school is very much at the centre of village life.

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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	2
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 get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage class. This is because the adults have a good understanding of the next steps needed in the children's learning. Careful liaison with the pre-school enables adults to know the children and their families well. Positive relationships ensure that children settle quickly and become increasingly confident. All welfare requirements are met and children are kept safe and healthy.

The provision in the bright, stimulating Reception classroom and outdoor area is good. Children choose from a range of well-planned, purposeful activities. During the inspection, they thoroughly enjoyed concocting a recipe for a magic mermaid mix, and were amazed when it miraculously appeared to explode everywhere. Children join in enthusiastically with poems, songs and counting rhymes. On appropriate occasions, children make their own choices about what they do. Adults continue to develop ways in which children can initiate their own learning activities. Children integrate well with the rest of the school for playtimes, lunchtimes and assemblies, where they are known and respected as individuals by the older pupils.

There is a strong emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills, so that they are ready to learn. Adults have a real sense of common purpose, and ensure that children are given every opportunity to succeed. Children are encouraged to 'have another go' and to 'keep trying', and as a result they begin to develop resilience. Learning is very well matched to children's needs, because adults make good use of the detailed assessments they keep on each child's achievements. By the time children join Year 1, most are confident speakers and are well on the way to becoming independent learners.

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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

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the survey was about average. They were extremely positive about the school. Written comments praised the individual provision and care for each child, and the approachability of the staff. Those spoken to were also very happy with their children's experience at school. A few would like more opportunities to support their child's learning. Inspectors looked into this, and found that the school offers a good number of opportunities for parents and carers to discover more about their children's learning, and ways in which they can support it.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lea CofE 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 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 78 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	68	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	65	12	35	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	44	18	53	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	44	14	41	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	65	11	32	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	53	12	35	4	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	68	9	26	2	6	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)	13	38	16	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	47	13	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	47	13	38	2	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	47	13	38	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	62	10	29	2	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	76	7	21	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	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.



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lea CofE Primary School, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7JY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you all and talking to you about your learning.

You go to a good school. You told us, and we agree, that the adults in your school all work together to make sure that you are safe and well looked after. You told us how much you enjoy your lessons and how your school helps you to live healthy lifestyles by taking part in plenty of sports and physical activities. We think that your behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and around the school. We were very interested to hear about your action group's work, which is clearly helping you to become responsible citizens.

There are a few things we have asked your teachers to do to make the school even better. We have asked them to make sure lessons are as good as they can possibly be, so that you reach higher standards. We have asked all your teachers to mark your work in the same way, so that you know exactly how to improve. In return, we would like you to respond to your teachers' comments in your books. This will show that you understand what you are asked to do. We would also like your parents and carers to make sure that you come to school at every opportunity, unless you are really too ill. This is because those of you who attend the most often make the most progress.

With very best wishes to you all

Yours sincerely

Fiona Arnison
Lead inspector

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