

Littleham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113370
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357328
Inspection dates	29–30 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Elms
Headteacher	Duncan Nelmes
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2008
School address	Littleham Close Exmouth Devon EX8 2QY
Telephone number	01395 266535
Fax number	01395 225494
Email address	admin@littleham.devon.sch.uk

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St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and observed five teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, parents and carers, teaching staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, minutes of the governing body's meetings, school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupil records and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed the views of parents and carers in the 33 Ofsted questionnaires returned.

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

- Attainment and progress, especially in mathematics in Year 1 and Year 2, and what this signifies in terms of the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Provision for cultural education and its effect on building up pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own.
- The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils, especially those requiring extra help, and the impact of initiatives to integrate fully pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable into all aspects of school life.
- The robustness of the school's systems for safeguarding pupils.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average school. Pupils are taught in five classes. Almost all are from White British backgrounds and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above that found in most primary schools. The needs of this group of pupils include emotional needs, although most have moderate learning difficulties. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the school's Reception and Nursery classes. The present headteacher took up his position in September 2010. The school holds several awards including the Healthy School award.

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 school which prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. The headteacher and his dedicated staff have created a caring environment in which pupils say they feel valued as individuals. Pupils enjoy school, achieve well and say that they feel very safe. One pupil commented, 'We all feel part of the school. It is so friendly and everyone knows each other', while some of the oldest pupils said that they were not looking forward to leaving the school in the summer. Parents and carers are very positive in their support for what they correctly believe is a good school. They appreciate the effective way the school safeguards and protects pupils and ensures that the quality of care and support it provides is of a consistently high order. 'The new headteacher has certainly had a positive effect on the school', and 'My son is lucky to have a place in this school' are typical comments in the returned parents' and carers' questionnaires.

The school is well led and managed by a very effective headteacher who provides a clear vision for improvement. Through his leadership, and that of his predecessor, the school has successfully improved its effectiveness since the last inspection by regularly checking and measuring its performance in order to improve its practice. This has led, for example, to an increase in pupils' attainment, especially in Year 6, and to improving the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is a clear indication of the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes because of consistently good teaching. Pupils continue to achieve well and make good, if slightly uneven, progress throughout the rest of the school. However, pupils' progress in mathematics in Year 1 and Year 2 is not as good as pupils' progress in reading and writing. Even so, inspection evidence, supported by school data, confirms that, by Year 6, pupils' attainment is average in both English and mathematics.

The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. Health and well-being are securely safeguarded and child protection procedures are good. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress are used very effectively to provide pupils with the guidance and support they need to become confident and independent learners.

Pupils enjoy talking about what they like about school. However, they have little experience of the multicultural nature of society in the United Kingdom. They find joining in discussions about this difficult through lack of understanding and this remains a gap in their learning.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By March 2012, raise attainment in mathematics in Year 1 and Year 2 by providing pupils with regular opportunities to use their basic mathematical skills successfully when solving practical mathematical problems.
- By December 2011, improve pupils' awareness and understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern society in the United Kingdom by providing pupils with regular opportunities to experience lifestyles and cultures of people who are from different backgrounds than their own.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are very enthusiastic about school although, while improving, this is not fully reflected in their average rate of attendance. Pupils have developed a very good understanding of the need to stay safe. They say that they feel very secure in school and are confident that adults will always deal with any rare instances of unkind behaviour quickly and fairly. They have a good grasp of the importance of eating healthy foods and exercising regularly, and talk enthusiastically about the fact that the school has gained the Healthy School award. They also take great pleasure in explaining in graphic detail the effects of fast food on a person's health. Older pupils willingly take on responsibility for looking after younger ones.

Pupils are proud of the role of the school council in ensuring that the school listens to their views and pupils also believe that they make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. For example, pupils, acting as school ambassadors, have forged good links with the local residents' association. The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Although the wider aspect of their cultural development is in need of improvement, their spiritual, moral and social development is strong and this is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and in their respect and care for others.

Children often enter the school with few of the skills expected for their age and, even though they make good progress in all areas of learning in both the Reception and Nursery classes, few children enter Year 1 with the skill levels expected for their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the more able and those who speak English as an additional language, make good overall progress in most year groups, especially in developing their reading and writing skills. However, pupils make less progress in mathematics in Year 1 and Year 2 than they do in English because they find it difficult to use their basic skills successfully when solving practical mathematical problems.

Pupils say that when teachers mark their work they usually give them ideas about how to improve. They list literacy and art among their favourite subjects and say that they enjoy lessons, especially when teachers mix subjects together in order to make learning more interesting. This was the case in a well-taught literacy lesson for Year 6 pupils when the teacher linked developing pupils' writing skills with measuring and describing the school's outdoor environment. Pupils worked hard and achieved well in building up their descriptive writing skills because they were really interested in the work they were doing.

Pupils' good overall progress in building up skills in literacy and numeracy, coupled with their very good attitudes towards learning, are preparing them well for their future

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economic well-being. Pupils usually work well in lessons, both independently and in small groups. This leaves teachers and effective teaching assistants with the time to offer a very good level of care and support to those pupils experiencing difficulties in learning. This was evident in a lesson in the Reception class. Here, the teacher was able to help individual children experiencing difficulties working independently because, even at this early stage in their education, all the other children were able to continue to work well without adult support.

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	2
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?

The curriculum links different subjects together well in order to make learning enjoyable for pupils while focusing on developing pupils' skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology. Teachers and effective teaching assistants have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and work enthusiastically together as a whole-school team in order to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of teaching is good even though, on rare occasions, the more-able pupils find the tasks they are given to complete a little easy and do not work to their full capability. Classrooms are well resourced and the quality of pupils' displayed work is of a good standard and confirms that the school's effectiveness is not restricted to ensuring good progress in mathematics and English.

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The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding and is the basis for their good personal development. Parents and carers value the way in which the school looks after their children and describe the school as 'very supportive'. Pupils are confident they will always be very well looked after. Very effective induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines. Vulnerable pupils receive a very effective level of well-targeted care and support which enables them to take a full part in school life. Pupils look forward to meeting interesting visitors to school and visiting places of interest when on school trips. They appreciate the diverse programme of enrichment activities the school provides for them, including a wide range of after-school activities. However, the curriculum does not offer regular opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the wider nature of modern society in the United Kingdom.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has worked hard since his appointment to ensure that the school has rigorously and thoroughly evaluated its effectiveness in order to make sure all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. This is evident in the good quality of the school's development planning. The headteacher has been well supported in this by the staff and by the governing body. Governors take their duties seriously and the governing body offers the school a good level of support and challenge.

The school has worked hard to forge good links with outside agencies and also with parents and carers, who value the way the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. The headteacher and staff are always on hand to meet parents and carers both before and after school each day to ensure any small worries are dealt with quickly and effectively. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet all requirements. This is reflected in the precision of the staff recruitment and vetting checks and the way in which the school regularly monitors and evaluates its policies and practices. Safeguarding training for staff and governors is ongoing and they are all very aware of the importance of their role in protecting pupils.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. Links with the local community are good and used well to develop pupils' understanding of the immediate world around them. However, pupils do not have a realistic appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community.

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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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy learning because teaching caters well for their individual needs. Parents and carers value the good quality of education the school provides for their children. One commented, 'My son was in the Nursery before joining the Reception class. I've always been happy about his learning and he really enjoys coming to school.'

The nursery and reception classrooms are colourful and vibrant places and provide stimulating and safe learning environments for children. However, the outdoor facilities are worn and uninspiring and do not reflect the good quality of the indoor provision. Good leadership and management ensure that ongoing records of children's progress are used effectively when planning further work and that a high priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development and to their welfare. As a result, children feel very safe and secure. They are happy and contented and know they can get help if they are worried about anything.

Lessons effectively blend opportunities for children to learn both independently and with adult direction. Recording of children's progress is ongoing and used consistently well to plan future work. As a result, children get off to a good start during their first two years at school because teaching is well matched to children's individual previous learning.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was an average rate of response to the parents' and carers' questionnaire returns. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires or who spoke to inspectors believed the school was led and managed effectively and that their children enjoyed school. They also believed that the school kept their children safe. Most were happy with their children's experiences at the school and felt that the quality of teaching was good. A very small minority of parents and carers felt the school did not meet their children's individual needs or help them to support their children's learning.

Inspectors considered these comments and judged that the school met pupils' individual needs well and helped parents and carers to support their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Littleham Church of England 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 82 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	58	13	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	58	14	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	45	14	42	2	6	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	48	14	42	2	6	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	18	55	13	39	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	48	13	39	3	9	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	55	12	36	3	9	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)	19	58	12	36	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	42	14	42	5	15	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	45	15	45	2	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	55	11	33	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	64	11	33	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	70	7	21	2	6	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 Littleham Church of England Primary School, Exmouth, EX8 2QY

Thank you for welcoming myself and the other inspector to your school. You were all really friendly and we soon realised why you enjoy coming to school. We found it very interesting reading your questionnaire replies and talking to you about what you like the most about your school. We agree with you when you say that you attend a good school.

Here are some of the main things we found out about your school.

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You then achieve well throughout the rest of your time at school.
- Your school takes very good care of you and makes sure that you are all very safe.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you are very caring and polite.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of making sure you have a healthy lifestyle.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead and manage the school well.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- help you to improve your progress in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to take part in practical problem-solving activities, especially in Year 1 and Year 2
- help all of you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds to yours.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome and remember you can all help your school to improve by attending as often as you can and continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron
Lead inspector

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