

# Littleport Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110637
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	356785
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graham Preston

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	367
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brenda Bean
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lesley Plant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Parsons Lane Littleport, Ely CB6 1JT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 teachers in 20 lessons. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, as well as 127 questionnaires from parents and carers and 98 from pupils.

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

- How effective has the school been in improving pupils' attainment and rates of progress in Years 3 to 6 and has it in place procedures for sustaining those improvements?
- Has the school sufficiently addressed the inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning identified in the last inspection, particularly in Years 3 to 6?
- What progress has the school made in supporting the needs of all pupils through better engaging parents and carers in their children's education?
- How effective has the governing body and senior leaders been in strengthening leadership and management across the school by increasing the involvement of other staff?

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than the average sized primary school that mainly serves the west side of the village of Littleport. A large majority of pupils are White British and there are no pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school is housed in a large, modern building together with a Surestart Children's Centre that supports families in the local area. The school also employs its own Social Inclusion Worker. Although not run by the school, it provides accommodation for a separately run pre-school nursery and facilitates a breakfast club that provides a range of sports and physical activities. The school has Healthy Schools status and recently gained the Eco-Schools 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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Littleport Community is a satisfactory school. This is an improving school that has successfully overcome earlier weaknesses in teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6, that resulted in a fall in pupils' standards of work. The concerted efforts of the headteacher and staff, well supported by an active governing body, have considerably improved most aspects of school provision. Parents recognise these improvements and appreciate the welcoming and inclusive learning environment the school provides.

During their time in the school, pupils make satisfactory progress, including across Years 3 to 6, to reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave. Pupils in Year 6 have at least reached their expected targets. Improved tracking of their progress and better teaching and learning are further accelerating the rate of pupils' progress in other years. A specific focus on supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is enabling them to achieve as well as others. There has been a notable improvement in pupils' attainment in mathematics but fewer pupils than expected reach the higher National Curriculum levels in the subject by the time they leave school.

School improvements have created an atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and want to learn. They attend regularly and behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive relationships with their teachers and each other. They respond well to the different opportunities to take responsibility such as making class rules about behaviour. The school council is active and pupils readily take on roles such as playground buddies with much participation in the local village such as singing, country dancing, and various fundraising and charity work. Pupils readily appreciate the growing cultural and religious diversity within the school helped by links with a contrasting East London school and a charitable organisation in Zambia. Opportunities for reflection and discussion in assemblies and lessons contribute to pupils' good spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

The school has well-established and effective provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and is building a potentially good team of experienced and recently qualified teachers and support staff in Years 1 to 6. This team has developed a good curriculum that successfully engages and involves pupils in their learning. There is much good practice in developing reading and writing in the earlier years and a wide range of visits and extra-curricular activities including sports. Information and communication technology is well used to present information clearly and there are many opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their learning. Inspectors found considerable good and even outstanding practice but this has yet to be fully established across the school. Teaching is never less than satisfactory but in some lessons, teachers do not clearly show what they want pupils to learn, or provide enough opportunities for pupils to assess their own and others' progress. On occasion, learning activities are not sufficiently challenging to meet

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the needs of all pupils, particularly in mathematics. Marking is regular and positive but the practice of showing pupils how they can improve their work and make progress in their National Curriculum levels is not fully developed.

The school makes every effort to identify the various needs of all its pupils including a considerable number with learning and social and emotional difficulties. In this it works closely with the various agencies and local family support staff, and deploys its own Social Inclusion Worker effectively to ensure all needs are met. It similarly cooperates with the separately run, on-site Children's Centre and pre-school nursery contributing to specialist training in aspects such as parenting.

The school is well led with high staff morale and a strong, shared commitment to continued school improvement. The governing body is actively involved in the life of the school and participates fully in monitoring and evaluating school practice. Working with the headteacher and staff, it has an accurate and realistic picture of the school's strengths and those areas needing improvement. The creation of four team leaders and a curriculum leader to closely monitor and improve provision, and carefully track pupils' progress in their respective years has significantly strengthened leadership and management across the school. The school has maintained good Early Years Foundation Stage provision, considerably improved teaching, established a good curriculum and outstanding care and support. These improvements have resulted in rising standards and improving rates of progress across the school especially in Years 3 to 6. This demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve higher level attainment in mathematics by:
  - providing consistently challenging learning opportunities in lessons for more-able pupils
- Build on the best teaching and assessment practice used in the school by:
  - ensuring that all lesson plans identify clear learning outcomes that are shared with pupils
  - providing regular opportunities in lessons for pupils to assess their own and one another's progress using relevant National Curriculum criteria
  - improving marking so that it shows pupils how to improve their work in order to achieve or exceed their National Curriculum targets.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

Pupils start in Year 1 having benefited from a good experience in the Early Years Foundation stage where they develop considerably in terms of their personal and social development. Progress in Years 1 and 2 has been consistently satisfactory or better and improvements in teaching and the curriculum now ensure that progress across other years is now at least satisfactory and increasingly good. For example, learning was particularly impressive in a combined Year 5 and 6 class where pupils confidently used powerful verbs

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and adjectives in writing an action scene and were able to evaluate and articulate the progress they made. A Year 4 lesson clearly demonstrated the good progress many were making in developing their use of adverbs in creative writing. The lesson also highlighted the effective progress being made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities helped, in this case, by carefully prepared learning steps. A Year 2 class showed the impact of a good curriculum where, armed with magnifying glasses, pupils developed their research and evaluation skills as they gathered information about the various 'mini-beasts' in the woods.

All pupils surveyed said they enjoy coming to school and endeavour to adopt healthy lifestyles. The before-school sports activities and other physical activities, as part of the local sports partnership, enables high participation levels. Pupils appreciate opportunities to be involved in varied activities. The school council is very active not only in raising funds but also taking decisions about outside play equipment and checking site security.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

With almost all parents and pupils being positive about school and the teaching, it is clear that the school has improved its provision considerably in the last two years. Pupils like and respect their teachers and teachers make substantial efforts to engage them. The best teaching has the added advantage of being both challenging but also accessible because of well-planned resources and the use of support staff. In these lessons, the

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learning purpose is clear, there are carefully planned learning steps with opportunities for pupils to reflect and recognise their progress. Satisfactory lessons, while having engaging activities, are not always sufficiently challenging, especially in mathematics and for more-able pupils. On occasion, it is not clear what the teacher wants the pupils to have learnt by completing the tasks. Marking is regular and shows pupils how well they have done but there is less feedback about what they might do next to improve. Therefore, few pupils see the link to their National Curriculum levels which the school reviews with parents termly.

Much effort has been made to ensure the curriculum is creative and exciting. Improvements in work schemes have raised standards in mathematics and numeracy and there is good work in phonics to support literacy. A broad range of activities support pupils' awareness of the wider world. For example, very recently the school hosted a visit from a London school as part of a project enacting war time evacuation.

Care, guidance and support are a strength of this inclusive school. The school provides a calm and supportive context for a considerable number of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. This is helped significantly by the investment made in establishing links with families in the local community through the Parent Support Adviser and the Social Inclusion Worker. Together with the school they provide detailed backgrounds of the needs and circumstances of different pupils, help parents and carers manage and enable the school to demonstrate a high level of success in supporting those pupils. The impact of the school's work is evident in the significant gains in pupils' personal and social development, positive attitudes to learning, improving attendance and accelerating progress in pupils' learning with the consequent rise in standards.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The expanded senior leadership team works very closely with the governing body in carrying out comprehensive reviews of the different areas of work within the school with detailed and perceptive evaluations of provision including teaching. As a result, senior staff and the governing body have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and learning. Well developed performance management systems ensure that individual staff are supported effectively to develop and improve their practice.

The school's commitment to equal opportunities is reflected in its caring ethos, holistic approach to pupils' development and careful tracking of their progress, including that of boys and girls. Response, where tracking data highlights slower progress, is rapid. For example, an after school group has been established to help identified boys improve their

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writing. The school has also responded quickly to a recent fall in the progress of some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The additional support provided successfully enabled these pupils to get back on track.

Through its different efforts to engage parents and carers, the school has seen a steady rise in parental involvement. Almost all parents and carers now attend the termly progress meetings, parents and carers help ensure pupils attend more regularly and there is a strong parent association with well attended activities. Parents and carers praise the considerable efforts the school makes to keep them informed through the learning logs pupils take home and value the courses provided, most recently in mathematics, to help them support their children's learning.

Safeguarding is secure and carefully monitored. All legal requirements are met, and all necessary training is up to date. The governing body is informed well about child protection and the work of the school in supporting pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. It is rigorous in its checks on risk assessment and active in ensuring that the school site is secure through regular liaison with the site manager and school council.

The school curriculum helps pupils develop a greater understanding of the wider world. Its links with the local community, an East London school and a charity setting up schools in Zambia enhances this work. However, the school has not systematically reviewed and evaluated its provision for community cohesion at this point.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the Foundation classes with skills below those expected for their age. The good Early Years Foundation Stage provision ensures that they subsequently make good progress across all areas of development, with strengths in physical, creative, social and



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personal skills. As a result, attainment is broadly average when children enter Year 1 though for some their literacy and numeracy remains a little below average. This good progress is made possible by learning opportunities that engage children's interest and foster their growing independence.

The curriculum covers all areas of learning, with many activities to develop imaginative and structured play both in and out of the classroom. The activities provide a good balance between work led by adults and opportunities for children to explore for themselves. The skilled staff are sensitive to the children's needs and help them become more confident learners. There is considerable focus on the use of letters linked to the sounds they make to develop children's literacy.

Leadership is founded on a thorough knowledge of Early Years Foundation Stage practice. Staff work well together to provide safe, attractive and well-resourced learning areas for the children. Accommodation is modern and spacious and the outside courtyard area provides a good range of learning activities. Children's development is assessed regularly and accurately and progress carefully tracked. Parents and carers are encouraged to be fully involved with their children's education with daily access to staff and well attended training providing helpful guidance and support. The school has forged strong links with the other local pre-schools especially the onsite pre-school.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Around a third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The great majority are positive about the school and those that added written comments praised the welcoming and supportive atmosphere. A number were very impressed by their children's eagerness to get to school reflecting the school's success in providing interesting and often 'fun' learning. Some children had clearly transferred from other areas and schools and their parents and carers were very grateful for the progress their children were now making. One such parent commented that 'Littleport has turned my son around. He now enjoys going to school, stays in school and is making progress. I cannot praise the school enough for what it has done for him and also for us as a family.' Another said, 'the impact this school has had on my child is incredible. He can now read freely and his confidence has rocketed.' A number of parents and carers think behaviour could be better. However, inspectors found behaviour to be consistently good in the different lessons they observed.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Littleport 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 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 367 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	52	56	44	4	1	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	69	54	55	43	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	55	43	69	54	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	49	56	44	8	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	69	54	53	42	2	2	3	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	49	60	47	4	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	43	67	53	6	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)	50	39	66	52	3	2	5	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	46	60	47	5	4	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	42	55	43	10	8	7	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	38	67	53	8	6	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	58	46	58	46	7	6	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	71	56	50	39	4	3	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



15 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Littleport Community Primary School, Ely CB6 1JT**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Your school gives you a satisfactory and rapidly improving education, and ensures that most of you achieve as well as you should by the time you leave.

Many of you appreciate the help and care you receive and say the school is a safe place to be. We were very impressed with the work the school does to support those of you who have particular learning needs or just need to be helped if you are having a problem. We were pleased to see how well behaved you are and how you work well together in lessons. You told us how much you like to take responsibility for example, as buddies, and have a voice in school matters through the school council. It was good to see that so many of you are committed to healthy eating and are actively involved in different sports and physical activities before and after school. We were also pleased too with your readiness to get involved and show initiative, for example, in supporting different charities, like the one that is helping fund school building in Zambia and being involved in the choir and other local activities.

The school told us that you were involved with a London school in recreating the evacuation of children from the cities during the Second World War which must have been fun. In fact many of your parents and carers recognise that the staff work hard to make lessons interesting which is perhaps why so many of you like school and have improved your attendance. The inspectors found the lessons interesting too but we think you will make even better progress if teachers explain in more detail what they want you to learn and give you the chance to assess how well you understood the lesson. We have also asked the school to give some of you more challenging work in mathematics especially in the upper years. Your teachers mark your work regularly and often tell you how you can improve it. This is very important and we have asked them to do more of this to explain more carefully how you can improve on your National Curriculum levels.

The headteacher, the governing body and all the staff are working hard to further improve the school. You can all help by continuing to improve your attendance, concentrate in lessons and take an active part in school affairs.

Yours sincerely

Graham Preston

Lead inspector

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