

Longford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126304
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	372960
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Tony Shield

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Hounslow
Headteacher	Kate Graves
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited 10 lessons or parts of lessons, and four teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, members of staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including the self-evaluation form, safeguarding and other policy documents, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. A small number of parents and carers spoke to inspectors at the school gate. In reaching their judgements, inspectors took into account the views of 33 parents and carers, in addition to those of pupils and staff, expressed in questionnaires.

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

- Evidence that attainment and progress are continuing to improve, and that improvements in provision are secure.
- The extent to which assessment is used to set challenging work.
- The impact of action taken to improve pupils' attendance.
- The extent to which all leaders are making an effective contribution to self-evaluation and school improvement.

Information about the school

Longford Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. Although most pupils are from a White British background, a small proportion are from other ethnic heritages, including occasional Traveller pupils. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These pupils have a range of learning difficulties, mostly concerning speech, language and communications difficulties. Some have behavioural, emotional and social problems. The school was formed in April 2010 with the amalgamation of two small village schools and continues to be based on the two sites of the former schools located in Britford and Odstock. The school has been awarded the Active Mark in recognition of its provision for sports activities.

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

Longford Primary is a satisfactory and improving school. The amalgamation of the two village schools has been handled with skill. The headteacher and governing body have ensured that parents, carers and pupils have benefited from being part of a larger school. The school is poised to move forward strongly.

There are a number of key strengths and some areas for continuing improvement.

- Pupils enjoy school. They feel very safe and warm; friendly relationships support and nurture pupils carefully. There is a strong commitment to the care, support and guidance of individual pupils. As one parent commented about their child: 'It would have been easy to give up on him, and they haven't!'
- Policies and procedures, including those related to safeguarding, are secure and pupils are well known to all the adults in school. Good partnerships with external agencies enable vulnerable pupils in particular to benefit from specialist support.
- In the Reception class, children are warmly welcomed; they settle happily into school routines and make good progress.
- Attainment often varies from year to year, because of the small number of pupils in each cohort. Nevertheless, the rate of pupils' progress is improving and while they make satisfactory progress, some do better, achieving well from their starting points.
- The school retains the support and confidence of its parents and carers. It has established a good partnership in which they share in the responsibility for their children's learning. However, attendance, while improving, is broadly average and a very small number of pupils miss too much schooling.
- Teaching is satisfactory although there are a number of strengths. Good use of resources, including information and communication technology (ICT) helps motivate pupils. Tasks are carefully chosen to make learning interesting and relevant. Marking is conscientiously carried out, although some pupils still say that they do not know how well they are doing. In addition, tasks given to pupils do not always build on their prior attainment successfully, because assessment in the classroom is not always used with enough precision. The pace of learning in some lessons is too slow.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle, and they do their best to eat healthily and take part in physical exercise.
- A strong team spirit among the newly integrated staff has been quickly established and the school's determination to improve is readily apparent.

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Middle leaders are developing their roles well in the new school but have yet to embed some monitoring procedures and the impact of their work is still to be seen.

- The bedrock of the school's improvements is its accurate and realistic self-evaluation. This ensures that key priorities for development are targeted in the right areas. Performance data are analysed at school level to plan support and interventions for pupils at risk of underachievement. Given the school's recent track record of improvement, and the school's plans for development, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - ensuring that teaching is more consistently good through a sharper use of assessment at classroom level to set tasks which challenge all pupils' learning and build on their prior attainment
 - informing pupils of how well they are doing and how they might improve
 - maintaining a rapid pace of learning in all lessons.
- Improve the attendance of the small number of pupils whose attendance is low.
- Consolidate and build the capacity of all middle leaders to make a contribution to self-evaluation and school improvement in their areas of responsibility.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment in both English and mathematics varies from year to year but is broadly average. In 2011, some Year 6 pupils achieved particularly well, especially in English. Over half of the pupils reached the highest available Level 5. In Year 2, pupils demonstrate developing skills in writing. They produced some particularly striking pieces of writing in response to the Anglo-Saxon curriculum day. One Year 2 pupil wrote a lengthy piece with considerable panache describing 'The Battle for Gold Castle'. However, the range of attainment is wide and other pupils' work is sometimes poorly presented alongside mistakes in sentence construction, spelling and punctuation. There are no significant differences between the attainment and progress of different groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language settle in quickly and are well supported so that they make at least satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are often good, but their concentration can wander when

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teachers talk too much or tasks do not encourage them to participate actively. While most pupils behave well, a small minority of pupils present challenging behaviour. Staff manage this well but pupils report that behaviour issues can be distracting. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously as school council members or in helping out in assembly. They have a growing awareness of their responsibility to the wider community through charitable fund raising and in taking part in village events such as the Flower Festival. Pupils’ basic skills, including computer skills, are satisfactory, and they learn to apply these in different contexts. This helps prepare them satisfactorily for their futures beyond primary school. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and through their work in religious education and the school’s personal, social and health education curriculum develop a keen interest in others’ values, beliefs and feelings.

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	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	3

How effective is the provision?

While teaching is satisfactory overall because of its sound impact on pupils’ learning, there are strengths apparent in most lessons. In the most effective lessons, learning is purposeful and productive. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn, and encourage pupils to take an active part through questioning. Marking is regular and helpful, although some pupils say they do not know how well they are doing in class. Tasks are often well chosen to make learning interesting and fun. Sometimes, teachers talk too much or do not ensure that the lesson moves on to the next step swiftly enough, with the result that pupils’ concentration wavers. In addition, planning is not always adapted to ensure tasks are sharply tailored to the

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants support teachers well and ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are included and that they fully understand their work.

The curriculum is well balanced and is designed to ensure an appropriate focus on developing pupils’ basic literacy and numeracy skills. Occasional opportunities to work off-timetable, such as the Anglo Saxon Day in Years 1 and 2, are enthusiastically presented and prompt some imaginative and exciting work. Pupils themselves say they particularly enjoy opportunities to work in this more active and practical way. The school has yet to fully embrace the idea of a more thematically planned curriculum but is considering doing so. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and enrichment provided by visits and visitors. Pupils eagerly take up the opportunities to learn musical instruments. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is planned to meet their particular needs.

Parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire have total confidence in the school’s ability to keep their children safe. The school’s good care, guidance and support ensure all pupils feel valued and trusted, and pupils know who to go to if they have a problem. Targeted support encourages all pupils, and especially those who are most vulnerable, to be included in all that the school offers. The school works effectively to ensure pupils who join the school at times other than the usual admission times, including those of Traveller heritage, are integrated quickly. Much successful work has been undertaken to improve the attendance of a small number of persistent absentees, although this remains a priority for the 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?

Realistic self-evaluation, based on a careful analysis of pupils’ performance and regular monitoring, has been the launch pad for school improvement. A shared vision of how the new school will develop has helped raise pupils’ aspirations and there is now a strong forward momentum. Challenging targets are being used to encourage all pupils to raise their expectations. The school is aware that much remains to be done, but there are secure signs of progress. Members of the governing body played a crucial strategic role in creating the new school. They have good structures and systems in place to carry out their responsibilities. Governors carry out their monitoring function satisfactorily although do not currently have a close enough oversight of aspects such as provision for pupils with special educational needs

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and/or disabilities to ensure all requirements are in place.

The school takes considerable care to ensure its safeguarding policies and practice are fully implemented. Staff undertake regular training to ensure they are kept up to date, and understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection and safer recruitment. While the school understands its context and has devised an appropriate curriculum to ensure pupils understand cultural, ethnic and faith diversity, it has not undertaken a formal audit or evaluation of its provision. Nevertheless, the school is cohesive and children from all backgrounds get on well together. The school is committed to equal opportunities and ensures any potential underachievement is prevented. As a result, there is no significant difference in the progress made by different groups of pupils. Partnerships across the federation, and with other external agencies, are especially helpful in promoting the inclusion of all pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception class settle quickly and make good progress from their starting points, particularly in their language, number and personal skills. As a result, they are well prepared for entry into Year 1. This is because of the carefully planned opportunities for children to practise these skills across the curriculum, for example the use of the rhyme ‘Hickory, Dickery Dock’ to develop children’s listening and speaking through role play. The environment is well organised and opportunities for learning through play are well planned, including in the outdoor area. The balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities is well judged, although not all activities are devised to take account of children’s different learning styles. Adult interventions are effective in getting children to play constructively and the ongoing assessment of children’s progress is carefully recorded in their ‘Learning Journeys’.

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There are good links with parents and carers enabling learning to be reinforced at home. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. There is a secure knowledge of strengths and areas for further development, and a clear way forward has been mapped out.

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

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are extremely happy with the school. Almost all parents and carers are pleased with their child’s experience at school and believe their children enjoy school. While a very small number of parents and carers expressed some concerns, there was no pattern to their comments, and these were more than outweighed by positive comments. Typical of such comments were: ‘a lovely school’; ‘my children are very happy here’.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Longford Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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, a higher than average response rate. In total, there are 58 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	73	8	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	76	7	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	16	48	15	45	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	48	14	42	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	76	7	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	18	55	12	36	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	55	13	39	0	0	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)	18	55	11	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	20	61	12	36	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	48	14	42	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	67	9	27	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	52	15	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	22	67	10	30	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 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"> ■ 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.



22 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Salisbury, SP5 4DS

Thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. We especially enjoyed meeting you and talking with some of you. In writing this report, I have taken account of what you told us. Your school is improving and providing you with a satisfactory education. Here are some of the main findings from the report.

- You told us how much you enjoy school and we saw this in the way you enthusiastically joined in everything the school has to offer.
- The school takes good care of you, ensuring you feel safe. While we saw plenty of examples of polite and thoughtful behaviour, some of you do not always concentrate and listen carefully enough in lessons.
- While most of you attend school regularly, a few do not and your learning suffers as a result.
- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start.
- The headteacher and all the staff are working hard to make your school better. As a result, your work in English and mathematics is getting better. However, some of you still have some more work to do to reach the highest standards.
- Teachers make lessons interesting and make you work hard. We have asked them to think about how they can more often set tasks for you which really make you think and build on what you already know. Some of you told us that you do not always know how well you are getting on. If the teachers forget to tell you, make sure you ask them!
- Members of the governing body and all your teachers know the school well and are determined to improve it even further. With your help they can!

Thank you once again for your help during our visit, and best wishes for your work in the future.

Yours sincerely

Tony Shield
Lead inspector

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