

Langham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114730
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	378917
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Sutherland-Harper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Thompson
Headteacher	Andrew MacDonald
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2006
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	3–4 October 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection team observed eight lessons taught by four teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, the school development plan, assessment data, monitoring and evaluation records, arrangements for safeguarding, and policies and procedures. In addition to replies from pupil and staff questionnaires, questionnaires from 69 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- How well are pupils, especially girls and the most able, progressing in writing and mathematics?
- How effectively and consistently is teaching developing to ensure that all groups of pupils are sufficiently challenged?
- How well do leaders and managers, including governors and middle managers, monitor and evaluate to ensure that improvement is on-going in all areas of the school?
- How effectively are marking and assessment strategies contributing to pupils' progress following the recent school focus in this area?

Information about the school

Langham Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The headteacher has recently been appointed to the school. Most children are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, of pupils speaking English as an additional language and of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are below national averages. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award. The school provides a before-school Early Birds club which is managed by the governing body.

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

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. It prides itself on being a welcoming community, a point summed up by one parental comment in, 'The teachers are exceptionally approachable.' The pace of pupils' progress is increasing following a recent focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Leaders and managers, including middle managers and governors, are working closely together to take the school forward. As a result, it is beginning to improve.

Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Expectations are clear and pupils value golden time which has recently been introduced to regulate behaviour. Pupils feel safe because they know there is an adult to whom they can speak about any concerns. They understand the different ways in which they can be fit and healthy and benefit from good outdoor facilities. Attendance rates are high.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage following recent developments in this area. Progress in the rest of the school is satisfactory, but it varies because the pace of learning is inconsistent and there is not always sufficient challenge in lessons. However, the rate of progress is now increasing as a result of focused tracking and monitoring procedures. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is beginning to improve because expectations are increasingly consistent, but best practice is not yet fully shared across the school to take it forward more quickly. The focus on improving pupils' reading skills has been effective; the school is now giving additional attention to developing pupils' writing and mathematical skills and ensuring consistent application of assessment strategies. The presentation of pupils' written work is still variable; too many pupils do not have well-formed handwriting. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able make similar progress to other groups because targeted one-to-one work is used to supplement group work in class. Progress for boys and girls is similar as teachers and support staff focus on engaging all members of the class. Although pupils are clear about their targets, they are sometimes less certain about their current attainment levels and what they have to do next to improve. Pupils' self-assessment is at an early stage of development.

The recently appointed headteacher has moved quickly to implement his vision of where he wants to take the school and has shared this vision with all staff, including governors and middle managers. The role of the governing body in helping the school to improve has been clarified and it is now playing a more active role in

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implementing the school's development plan. Self-evaluation has accurately identified key areas for improvement, such as writing and assessment. Expectations are being made clear through increased dialogue with staff across the school. As a result, the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory and the pace of improvement is increasing.

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?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by July 2012 to ensure that the rate of pupils' progress quickens by:
 - incorporating further pace and challenge, including more timed activities, into lessons
 - improving pupils' handwriting skills through the example set by teachers and ensuring that expectations of good presentation are clear and consistent in all lessons
 - sharing best practice across the school.
- Improve assessment procedures by July 2012 by:
 - ensuring that all pupils are clear about their current attainment and what they have to do next to improve
 - involving pupils more in the assessment of their own learning
 - ensuring that systems are consistently applied across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress with their learning because tracking and monitoring procedures are now being consistently applied across the school. Any underachievement is quickly identified and strategies, such as reviews of lesson planning, are put in place to tackle it. Teachers and support staff ensure that all groups of pupils, including girls and the most able, achieve and enjoy their learning; pupils are drawn into the lesson and contribute with increasing frequency. The pace of learning increases when challenge is added and a time limit is set for independent work to be finished. A good literacy lesson in Years 5 and 6 challenged pupils, playing the role of a native chief, to answer questions from the class; other responses were electronically timed to add pace. Pupils benefit from additional initiatives like the Early Birds club before school which develops responses from pupils with sensory challenges. During the inspection, one class in costume was excited about the learning experience offered by a visit to a local historical site. Pupils have regular opportunities to use computers in their work and to do extended writing, but written presentation skills are generally poor.

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Behaviour is good because expectations are consistent across the school. Pupils get on well with each other and with adults and relish opportunities to help one another. In an Early Birds club session before school, pupils served as activity leaders and helped support staff to ensure that fellow pupils were on task and completed activities successfully. The very large majority of pupils feel safe and parents and carers strongly agree. Healthy School status has helped the school to ensure pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy, and pupils make good use of the outdoor areas. Uptake of school clubs is good. Pupils contribute to the school through regular meetings of the school council and have opportunities to attend some meetings of the governing body in order to present their views on aspects of school development. They serve as play leaders, including for the Early Birds club, raise funds for charities and have participated in the village of the year competition. Workplace skills are adequately developed, but they are improving as pupils make greater progress in mathematics and writing. Pupils make assured and regular use of information and communication technology in lessons. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils show interest in the world around them, have a clear sense of right and wrong and get on well with others. They have a limited awareness of other cultures at first-hand, and their sense of awe and wonder is slowly developing as pace and challenge in lessons improve.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It ensures that pupils are making the progress

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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expected for their age group. The recent whole-school focus on improving the quality of teaching through increased monitoring and dialogue between teaching staff has been effective and pupils' progress is improving as a result. Teachers have secure subject knowledge which is supplemented by opportunities for professional development. Where lessons proceed at a brisk pace and challenge is provided throughout the lesson, teaching stimulates pupils to produce high-quality, independent work. In a good mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, focused use of questions and the clear expectation that all groups could provide an oral justification for their answers led to pupils' good involvement. Sharing of best practice to encourage such response is slowly being spread across the school. However, teachers do not have high enough expectations with regard to the way pupils present their written work. Lessons are adequately planned, but opportunities for pupils to report back on their learning and their independent work vary between classes. Focused support from other adults helps all groups of pupils to take their learning forward. Recent work on assessment procedures means that tracking strategies are now more detailed and marking offers increased feedback to pupils. Oral feedback and targeted questioning help to take learning forward but opportunities for pupils to assess their own progress with learning are limited.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Topic work makes links between different subjects, such as science and geography, to enable pupils to better understand the world around them. Work is adequately differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Colourful displays around the school and day excursions help to stimulate interest. Links with a local secondary school have enhanced the mathematics provision for the most able, and close links with a school in Hackney are giving pupils an additional perspective on their own experiences. Interest is stimulated whenever pupils take the lead in delivering aspects of the topic through feedback and role play and have timed, practical tasks to undertake. In too many lessons, the teacher spends too long talking and does not give pupils enough opportunities to use and apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school has a developing sense of community but also values each individual. Pastoral arrangements support pupils at times of particular need. Support for pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable is established, for example, through the early morning club for pupils with sensory challenges. Transition arrangements into and out of the school are being expanded. Induction arrangements for those entering the school are good. Transition arrangements for those moving on to secondary school are adequate; the school is extending its links with other schools and providers to improve these arrangements.

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

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has worked closely and quickly with leaders and managers at all levels, including governors and middle managers, to form an accurate picture of how well the school is performing and what it needs to do to improve. Leaders and managers recognised that there are weaknesses in pupils' writing and mathematics, and that monitoring and evaluation procedures are not sharp enough. Decisive action has been taken. As a result, the rate of progress is increasing because expectations are clear and all staff are working together to deliver improvements. Middle managers have taken a lead in the areas of teaching and assessment to ensure that targets are met. The school is making adequate but improving use of its resources to meet pupils' needs and secure satisfactory outcomes, thereby providing satisfactory value for money.

The school has established satisfactory partnerships with parents and carers to support learning and progress. Communication is developing, for example, through the recently upgraded school newsletter with a column for the governing body. Partnerships with local and other providers support teaching and learning; the school is extending these links in order to raise attainment and enhance provision. The school is careful to ensure that opportunities are open to all in line with its emphasis on the individual and that there is no discrimination. Gaps in attainment are now closing.

Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has recently been reconstituted and has worked quickly and carefully to increase the challenge and support it offers the school; the impact of this work is already beginning to show in the increasing understanding the governing body has on school improvement. The governing body ensures that children are safe and that staff are regularly trained in safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding meets current requirements.

The school has undertaken an audit of community cohesion and formulated an action plan. Links are developing at both local and national level, including with an inner-city school, to give pupils an additional perspective on their educational experiences. Pupils are increasingly involved in contributing to their local community and their school. They participated in one of the interview processes for the new headteacher and suggested the design for the recent playground improvements. However, opportunities to mix with people from other cultural backgrounds are limited. Promotion of community cohesion within the school community is at an early stage of development as is evaluation of the impact of this work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is in line with children of a similar age. Assessment results show that the very large majority of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress towards the expected standards for the end of the reception year in most areas of learning. Children are assessed quickly on entry and their progress is continually followed up. Children make good progress in developing a sense of responsibility as they make good use of the range of resources on offer and the recently developed outdoor area. Children play and work well together and follow well-established routines. They look after each other, enjoy good relationships with adults and are always ready to put away equipment they have used. Behaviour is good because expectations are clear and follow from good induction procedures. Pupils are adequately safeguarded in a secure environment. Well-equipped indoor and outdoor classrooms offer a good range of challenging activities. Activities are well planned to provide opportunities for on-going assessment against early learning goals; these activities are regularly reviewed by adults who work closely together on all aspects of planning and delivery. There are good links with parents and carers who are invited to come into the school whenever they wish to see what work their children are doing. Leaders and managers assess progress effectively to see how it can be improved.

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

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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents and carers replied to the questionnaire. The very large majority are very pleased with their children's experiences at the school. They are especially happy with the teaching and the ways in which the school keeps their children safe and enables them to have a healthy lifestyle. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour, progress and the ways in which the school meets their children's particular needs. Inspectors found that behaviour is good and that children are making the progress expected for their age group. Adequate support systems are in place to ensure the school meets the particular needs of each child.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Langham 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 106 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	46	32	46	4	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	49	31	45	3	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	35	38	55	5	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	29	36	52	9	13	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	28	41	38	55	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	35	39	57	6	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	41	36	52	2	3	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)	26	38	32	46	2	3	3	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	33	35	51	8	12	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	26	38	55	9	13	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	26	37	54	7	10	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	22	32	35	51	4	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	43	32	46	6	9	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.



5 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langham Primary School, Colchester, CO4 5PB

Thank you for the welcome you gave us during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work. You told us that you enjoy school and learn a lot in lessons. I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school.

We found that Langham Primary School is a satisfactory school. Here are some of the things your school does well.

- Behaviour is good because you know what is expected of you and you value golden time.
- You have good opportunities to contribute to decisions about your school.
- Your headteacher and his staff are working to improve teaching and how you learn.
- You feel safe and healthy because of the school's efforts to keep you so.

The headteacher and his staff want to improve your school so we have made some suggestions which can help:

- make sure teachers share with each other the best ways to help you progress so that written work is always neat and that there is plenty of challenge in all activities
- provide more opportunities for you to assess your own work so you are clear about how well you are doing and what you need to do next to improve.

You can help by trying to improve your handwriting and continuing to work hard in class.

The inspectors want to thank you again for being so helpful and send best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sutherland-Harper
Lead inspector

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