

Long Sutton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123835
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380743
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elaine Cosser
Headteacher	Lizzie Reynolds
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and observed three teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. Inspectors also spoke to a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's documentation, policies including those relating to safeguarding, data on pupils' progress, curriculum planning, local authority reports, school development planning and a sample of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 50 parents and carers, 58 pupils and 12 staff.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies to halt the decline in progress and attainment, especially in writing.
- How well the school is working to address inconsistencies in the quality of provision and progress in different year groups.
- The quality of the support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The accuracy of assessment and the extent to which it is used to help set pupils challenging targets and promote their progress.

Information about the school

Long Sutton Church of England Primary is a small village school in which pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. A minority of pupils travel to school from outside the village. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the expected times is above average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and high in some year groups. These cover a range of needs including social, emotional and behavioural needs and physical disability. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school provides a breakfast club. It holds the Activemark award. There has been a change of headteacher and considerable staff changes since the school was last inspected.

The school shares the site with the Toy Box Pre-school which is run by a private provider and was not inspected by this inspection team.

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

This school provides a satisfactory standard of education. There has been a period of considerable lengthy staff absences and changes, since the last inspection, which is still affecting the school. Despite this, senior leaders, fully supported by the governing body and staff team, have worked determinedly to rectify the decline in attainment and progress. Consequently, they have developed an appropriate curriculum which helps pupils achieve satisfactorily. It is enriched particularly well, ensuring they really enjoy school and attain above average attendance levels. Strong partnerships with the local community and parents and carers also support pupils' well-being and education well.

Provision and achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Accurate self-evaluation successfully supports well-focused development planning which is beginning to raise attainment and progress in other year groups. In mathematics, attainment has risen well due to pupils' good progress last year. Improvements in the teaching of English have halted a decline in attainment, but progress is not as good as in mathematics. Overall attainment is average and achievement satisfactory, with pupils gaining a secure range of skills to support their future.

Strategies to further improve the quality of reading and writing are already beginning to show some success. The letters and sounds programme is enhancing reading skills and spelling. Pupils can write in a range of formats and for different audiences, but there has been insufficient focus on providing writing topics that engage pupils' interest. Pupils have too few opportunities for writing in different formats in other subjects and for taking full responsibility for planning and organising their work independently. This limited attainment in the 2011 Year 6 tests. Strategies are already in place to address this due to accurate self-evaluation and development planning well focused on weaker aspects, which gives the school a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Pupils are well cared for, including in the well-run breakfast club, through rigorous and effective safeguarding procedures. The very large majority of support and guidance aspects are good. Pupils at risk of underachieving, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported especially well so they make good progress. Most pupils' personal development is good, for example in their knowledge of health and safety, and ways they can contribute to the school and local community. Very good spiritual and cultural development makes a major contribution to the school's good promotion of community cohesion. Most pupils get on well

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together, conforming to school rules, and behaviour at playtimes is uniformly good. However, in the younger classes, staff do not always encourage pupils who find it difficult to sit quietly and listen carefully, which limits their learning.

All teaching is at least satisfactory, and good in some aspects, most notably in teachers' subject expertise and the clarity with which they explain and demonstrate new things. However, there are inconsistencies in a small minority of lessons, especially in how well planning is adapted to set high challenges for pupils of different ages or ability. Lesson objectives are sometimes too broad for pupils to recognise what is expected of them and for staff to assess what pupils have achieved. Individual pupil targets, well based on accurate assessment information, are increasingly helping to promote progress well. But these are relatively new and are not always referred to by staff or pupils themselves to support learning and secure good progress.

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 attainment and progress, especially in writing, through:
 - adapting planning to more closely meet different pupils' needs and interests
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use the full range of their writing skills in other subjects
 - ensuring that pupils become skilled at taking full responsibility for planning and organising their own work.
- Increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning through ensuring that, by July 2012, the majority of lessons are good, and that in all lessons:
 - activities consistently challenge and encourage pupils to do their best
 - lesson objectives clearly set out for pupils what is expected of them and allow teachers to more easily measure the progress they make
 - pupils are encouraged to take full account of individual targets to improve their work.
- Ensure that all staff consistently reinforce the agreed behaviour policy in order to help younger pupils gain and maintain self-control and listen attentively to advice and instructions about their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

While some year groups have been affected by inadequate progress in the past, pupils' progress is currently satisfactory overall and stronger in mathematics. However, some variation between classes and year groups remains due to differences in the level of challenge pupils receive. Reception children get off to a good start, achieving well from expected levels of knowledge and understanding.

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Mathematically, Year 2 pupils work accurately in the four operations and by Year 6, pupils understand place value well, working competently with decimals, fractions, data and negative numbers to solve problems. As they reach Year 2, pupils use good phonic (the sounds that letters make) knowledge to read unknown words and spell accurately, often including ‘wow’ words to enliven their stories. By Year 6, pupils’ reading skills are above average. They use adventurous vocabulary, alliteration and metaphors in their writing, know the importance of using ‘bossy words’ for instructions and the past tense when recounting events. However, across the school, pupils’ use of these skills in a range of situations is underdeveloped. The good achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is evident in the increasing number reaching average attainment levels.

Pupils’ good awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle is apparent in the well-balanced meals they prepare. Participation in sport is excellent, helping achieve the Activemark award. Pupils feel very safe in school, being well aware of how to keep safe in different situations, for example in water. Playground monitors help sort out differences, ensuring good behaviour. Most pupils show respect for others, although some younger pupils find it difficult to take turns. Pupils contribute well to school activities, for example as school councillors and in church and village events. They support the wider community well through their commitment to recycling and fundraising for charities. Pupils’ spiritual reflection in school worship is especially good and pupils have a well-developed understanding of the important features in other religions and cultures, for example in Russia or India.

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	2
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	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	2
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

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How effective is the provision?

Improvements in provision are helping attainment and progress to rise. Pupils benefit from increasingly good teaching of important new skills in literacy and numeracy, with the interactive whiteboard used effectively to demonstrate new learning. Higher expectations of presentation have improved the quality of pupils’ work. However, there is still some difference in the level of challenge in tasks set, especially the overuse of worksheets or work taken directly from textbooks, which are not always well targeted to individual needs, and this limits their ability to achieve well. Progress is tracked carefully, with pupils’ progress meetings clearly identifying where extra support is needed. Staff have correctly identified the need to hold these more regularly to allow swifter intervention, although special programmes are successfully helping some pupils to catch-up. Well-established procedures ensure there is good support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which helps them to achieve well. Additionally, learning support assistants provide exceptional support for those with significant needs, including physical disability. Induction and transfer arrangements are good, especially in helping Reception children settle in to school.

Pupils are well cared for. In the past, pastoral support for younger pupils’ behaviour has not always been effective, although a new programme to address this is beginning to bring about improvement. Apart from this, provision supports pupils’ personal, social and health education well, especially so with regard to their health, safety and social skills. The rich and creative curriculum seamlessly links subjects together in topics and enhances learning and enjoyment, although not yet sufficiently in writing to raise achievement, especially for boys. Excellent extra-curricular provision has a marked impact on pupils’ participation in sport and their cultural awareness. In the latter, the local culture is promoted exceptionally well through focusing on wood turning, apple pressing and traditional story-telling. Knowledge of different cultures is also enhanced through visitors from India and Russian dancers.

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?

The headteacher exhibits strong drive and ambition and, with the support of the

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senior teacher, has ensured there is a strong focus on improvement. Staff reflect well on their practice, willingly accepting and acting on advice. Rigorous and accurate tracking of pupils’ progress has sharpened development planning, pinpointing the causes of weaknesses and raising awareness of where further improvement is needed. These developments are already bearing fruit with improving achievement in mathematics; however, inconsistencies in teaching and pupils’ achievement remain.

Members of the governing body provide a good range of skills and support the school’s work appropriately. The introduction of improved monitoring procedures is starting to raise the level of challenge they provide to the school. All important safeguarding policies and procedures are monitored well, including those related to child protection and risk assessment, with staff well trained in this and first aid. Staff vetting is very effective, helping ensure pupils are kept safe and free from harm.

The highly positive relationship with most parents and carers ensures strong satisfaction with the school. They are well informed, including about their children’s progress, supporting this effectively through home learning. Many provide support for school activities and fundraising, as do members of the local community and the church, with whom the school has particularly good links. These, and links with local schools and a school in India, support pupils’ education and welfare especially well. Links with pre-school providers are good, although liaison with regard to developing children’s social and emotional skills is an area for development. School leaders appropriately tackle discrimination, working satisfactorily to ensure all pupils have equal opportunity with regard to their achievement. The school works effectively to promote community cohesion in the locality and wider world. Good attention is given, in this largely White British community, to raising awareness of diversity elsewhere in this country, although pupils have few opportunities for direct experience of this.

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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress across all areas of learning because provision is well tailored to meet their needs and interests as well as the needs of the Year 1 pupils in this class. Children benefit from strong assessment procedures, very regularly carried out by the skilled teacher and classroom assistants. Planning is constantly adjusted to take account of this so children build on and extend their learning well. This is evident in the range of groups to help children learn the sounds in words so that, by Year 1, most recognise a good range of words and sound out new words on their own. Children enjoy looking at books, readily 'taking time out' in the quiet reading corner. Oral language is promoted especially well through class discussions and the many questions adults ask children when they are working in groups or independently. Children become used to explaining or describing new things, with role play promoting their creativity. This gives them a very good awareness, for example, of how to write in sentences and describe characters in a story. Children quickly learn to count, many to 20 or beyond, and to work out simple addition and subtraction, recording this accurately. They develop a good understanding of shape and measures, using words like tallest or widest with some beginning to use standard measures. Children enjoy dance, rhymes and music, and can control their movements on the outdoor climbing frame or wheeled toys, although the area for this is rather limited. They exhibit strong curiosity in the world around them, enjoying the many trips and walks they go on, especially for the traffic survey in the village. On this and all occasions, children are well cared for. Attention to specific needs is very good, especially for children who find learning really difficult, which ensures all are included well.

Although when they start, children's skills are generally at the level expected, they are weaker in some aspects of personal, emotional and social development. This is most notable for some boys who are immature, seek attention and talk or call out when they should be listening. Although a good strategy is now in place to tackle this, provision has not been so effective in the past, with children continuing to exhibit these weaknesses as they move into older year groups. Generally, however, children work well together and enjoy taking on responsibility.

Reception staff work together very effectively as a team. This helps to ensure provision is well led and managed and, during the absence of the permanent teacher, staff are very well supported by the headteacher.

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

Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaires and who wrote or spoke to the inspectors have positive views. They feel that the school keeps their children safe and their children enjoy being there. They are also pleased about the quality of teaching and the way their children are prepared for the future, the friendliness and approachability of staff, and the leadership of the headteacher. Inspection evidence agrees that pupils are kept safe and well cared for, and that they enjoy school. It finds some aspects of teaching to be good, but there are still some inconsistencies across the different classes. Some remaining weaknesses in English mean that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the future. Evidence shows that staff are approachable and willing to respond to concerns. The headteacher is supporting staff well to tackle weaker aspects of the school’s work.

The main aspects about which a very small minority of parents and carers raised concerns relate to the information provided on their children’s progress and the help they are given to support this. Inspection evidence indicates that the school engages well with parents and carers. Systems put in place over the past year provide good information on progress, which is regularly shared with parents and carers, who have a range of opportunities to support learning at home. In both these aspects, staff are willing to provide more information and support if asked. A few parents and carers are also concerned about behaviour. Evidence shows that most pupils behave well and any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively. However, until recently, less had been done to ensure younger pupils consistently behaved well in lessons, although this is now being addressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Long Sutton 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 114 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	58	19	38	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	42	26	52	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	22	44	21	42	7	14	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	28	28	56	6	12	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	20	40	24	48	4	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	17	34	24	48	9	18	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	44	26	52	0	0	2	4
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	38	23	46	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	19	38	24	48	6	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	26	27	54	8	16	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	22	28	56	6	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	32	28	56	5	10	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	17	34	26	52	6	12	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.



20 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Long Sutton Church of England Primary School, Langport
TA10 9NT**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. We were sorry not to see the Year 5 and 6 pupils, but we spent a lot of time looking at their work and progress records. We have judged your school to be satisfactory, but things are improving and some aspects are already good.

Here are some of the things we found out were good about the school.

- Your progress is improving, especially in mathematics, where attainment is rising.
- Adults take good care of you and provide good support and guidance, particularly in your personal development, where most of you make good progress.
- Those of you who find learning or behaving well especially difficult receive very good support and make good progress.
- Staff plan interesting activities which you enjoy, and the clubs, visits and visitors are excellent, and support your learning really well.
- Staff work well with your parents and carers, and other groups and schools in the community, and with the church, to help support your progress.

Here are some of the things we have asked the school to improve.

- Improve your progress in writing by providing activities that encourage you to do your best and use your writing skills more in different subjects.
- Make sure more lessons are good and identify the targets you need to reach.
- Encourage all pupils to sit still and listen quietly in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson
Lead Inspector

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