

Longstone CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112887
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378596
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Gledhill
Headteacher	Jane Martlew (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 10 lessons taught by five teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They also talked informally to parents and carers. They observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress, child protection and safeguarding procedures and governing body minutes. They looked at samples of pupils' past and present work and scrutinised responses from 51 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 77 by pupils and 15 by staff.

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

- Do all groups of pupils especially in Key Stage 2 make consistent progress, particularly in mathematics?
- Do staff make full use of assessment information to provide challenging activities that meet the needs of all groups of pupils?
- Is the monitoring of the work of the school rigorous enough to accurately identify the areas for further improvement?
- Is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage based on a suitable curriculum?

Information about the school

This is a small primary school in a rural area of North Derbyshire. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. Following the previous inspection the school appointed a new headteacher. Since Easter this year an acting headteacher has been in post while another new appointment is made. The school has gained recognition including as an Eco school and holds Healthy Schools status and a full International School award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This school provides a satisfactory quality of education. There are longstanding strengths in several areas; these include the way the school enriches pupils' learning and skills, particularly in music and sport. The quality of work produced by the school orchestra and in singing is high. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles extremely well and the range of opportunities for them to contribute to the school and wider community, including as school buddies, is excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and supported through the ethos of the school and the excellent focus on cultural development. The extensive work the school has undertaken to promote not only local links but also national and international awareness ensures that its promotion of community cohesion is excellent. Pupils say they really like the school and as one parent notes: 'My child skips into school without a backward glance and is just as happy when she skips out at the end of the day – she loves being part of the Longstone school family'.

Children enter the school with skills that are often above expectations for their age. When they leave Year 6, standards are above national averages. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school but this is somewhat variable. Many pupils have particularly good skills in reading which makes a positive impact on their writing. Data and inspection evidence show that standards in mathematics are often slightly above average but not at quite the same level as in English. This is, in part at least, because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge to solve problems in mathematics lessons. Pupils do not find the use of workbooks and worksheets particularly stimulating.

Teaching, learning and curriculum planning are satisfactory overall, ranging from good to examples of inadequate provision. Where teaching is most effective, staff use the range of assessment information well to set work for pupils at different levels. This is not always effective and at times work is the same for a whole mixed-age and ability class. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is broadly satisfactory but not securely based on the curriculum for children of this age. This is because learning is not sufficiently promoted through carefully structured play-based activities. The outdoor areas are not used effectively enough to develop independence and investigation. The care, guidance and support of pupils across the school are good. This is a caring community where there is effective support for everyone including pupils with additional needs.

The school is in a transitional stage of development with several periods in the last

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few years where there has been an acting headteacher. Senior staff and governors are all very committed to the school and work hard to provide stability for the pupils. As a very close-knit team it has, however, proved difficult for them to rigorously and critically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is provided for the pupils. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall although there has been limited formal monitoring of the effectiveness of provision in some areas recently. While aspects for improvement such as provision for children in the Early Years have been recognised as a priority, including at the last inspection, improvements have not been pursued with sufficient determination to overcome the weaknesses rapidly. However, as a result of the leaders' shared vision for the future, and a commitment to the school community, above average attainment has been maintained by Year 6 pupils while their attainment in English has been significantly above average; this demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity for 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 provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring curriculum planning provides more practical learning and activities children choose for themselves
 - providing a stimulating outdoor environment that enables them to learn through structured play and investigations.

- Ensure that pupils make consistent progress as they move through the school and particularly in mathematics by:
 - making full use of the range of assessment information to set work that is challenging for all groups of pupils
 - providing activities that encourage pupils of all ages to take an active part in finding things out for themselves.

- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school by:
 - ensuring that the checks of planning, teaching and learning are rigorously evaluative and identify areas for further improvement
 - extending the role of subject leaders in promoting curriculum improvements.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter Year 1 as confident and articulate young learners who want to do well. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in all subjects and over a number of years standards have been significantly above national averages. Daily reading sessions with staff and a well-briefed team of volunteers, together with work on letters and sounds, leads to pupils making good progress in their reading which has a

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positive impact on writing. This was illustrated when pupils in Years 1 and 2 made good progress in using parts of a poem about animals to substitute their own ideas for descriptions of the animals and the sounds they make.

While overall standards are above average, in the last two years attainment in Key Stage 2 has no longer been significantly above national averages in mathematics. Because of the uneven rate of progress this is little more than satisfactory overall. Data show that across the school boys have often done better than girls but no specific differences were noted in the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and together with the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language they make similar progress to their classmates. Pupils develop a good level of confidence and basic skills that contribute well to their future.

Pupils’ behaviour is good; many work with enthusiasm in some lessons but display only intermittent interest when the planned activities lack challenge. At times, some pupils are very quiet and offer few ideas to class discussions. Occasionally, their work is not presented as neatly as it could be. Pupils think there is little bullying and recognise that teasing and misbehaviour are not appropriate. Pupils have an excellent approach to adopting a healthy lifestyle through an outstanding range of activities that promote an interest in sport and Eco awareness. This is recognised in numerous awards and competition success. There is an excellent range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities in and around the school and wider community. All Year 6 pupils undertake Young Leader training and support and lead games and sports with younger children at break and lunch times, and with local pre-school groups.

Pupil’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the school ethos and a key strength. Whole school celebration assemblies are particularly successful in illustrating how the community values the talents of all. The excellent quality of singing is supported by the outstanding development of instrumental skills.

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	2
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	1

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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The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The long-serving and experienced staff team have good relationships with pupils and value their efforts. They deploy additional adults well, including the large team of volunteer helpers, to support learning and progress. In the most effective lessons teachers make good use of time to give precise and short introductions, leaving sufficient opportunity for pupils to apply their skills. This was seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, who worked in a circle to develop more speedy responses to mental mathematics problems. At times, introductions are too lengthy and in mixed-aged classes do not always meet the needs of all pupils. In several lessons pupils had only limited opportunities to discuss their ideas. The planning of lessons is satisfactory; while some staff make good use of assessment information to set work that challenges those of different abilities, this is not consistent.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall but is a mix of some very successful and other weaker elements. Work to enrich learning through a good range of visits to places of educational interest and visitors who extend learning, for example in science and the arts, are very successful. Specialist teaching to support music and physical education results in high quality work. There is much justifiable pride in the excellent performances and results. Cross-curricular links between subjects are satisfactory with, for example, opportunities to employ mathematical skills in geography and science. However, lesson observations and the sample of recent work indicate fewer opportunities within mathematics lessons for pupils to use problem solving approaches. The school day starts later than in most schools and when, for example, celebration assemblies considerably overrun this limits the amount of time available for English and mathematics lessons when pupils are at their freshest.

Pastoral care is effective in ensuring that the specific needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and those who find learning difficult, are identified and met. The special educational needs coordinator and a nominated teaching assistant liaise well to identify whether the pupils' needs are met. Practical support and guidance provided from within the school and external sources contribute to their well-being and learning. Transfer arrangements into secondary education are well planned. Pupils' targets are set for improvement; however, the sample of pupils' work indicates these are often the same or very similar for all pupils in a year group. They are therefore not always used well enough to identify the sometimes small individual steps needed for further improvement.

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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?

In recent times there have been many challenges to the leadership team to maintain the school's many strengths while continuing to move forward. One staff member stated: 'The special thing about this school is the care and support shown by the whole school community – all staff and governors included – not only to the children but to each other'. The acting headteacher, who has assumed the role several times and for quite lengthy periods, is widely appreciated by staff and governors for her efforts to enable the school to function smoothly. Staff often share responsibilities including currently in mathematics. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the school and some are widely involved in day-to-day activities. They have prioritised the retention of a generous number of staff to support learning including in information and communication technology. The monitoring of the work of the school is broadly satisfactory but at times evaluations have not focused sufficiently on what needs to be improved.

Partnerships with a range of external agencies, the diocese and other local schools are long established and effective, particularly in the arts and sport. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination is satisfactory, although staff do not always use information well enough to ensure that progress is consistent. Safeguarding procedures are good. All requirements are met rigorously and there are very careful checks of those who work with the pupils, including volunteers. Staff are suitably trained and apply their knowledge and understanding to care for and support the pupils well. The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion is outstanding. There are extensive links with other schools and organisations including in communities which are set in a different social and cultural context to Longstone, including those in urban and multi-cultural communities. Activities include visits to the Open Centre in Derby, a full curriculum focus on World Week and links with schools in Barnsley, France and Africa. An extensive range of charitable work includes local, national and international events. The school is rightly proud to hold the full International Schools award.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and	3
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driving improvement 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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception group work within a mixed-age class alongside some of the pupils in Year 1. They enter with skills which often are above the expectations for their age, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and their ability to communicate with others. They are bright, lively and chatty individuals who enjoy their time in school. They settle happily because they want to learn and are warmly welcomed and valued as part of the school family. They make broadly satisfactory progress. The main weakness is that planning is not securely based on an appropriate curriculum for children of this age. Virtually all of the activities observed were adult-led. There were few opportunities for children to choose from a range of structured and focused play activities or follow their own interests in practical and problem-solving tasks. The learning environment indoors and particularly outside is not well focused on giving the children a wide range of experiences from which they can learn and develop their imagination and key skills. Leadership and management are broadly satisfactory. The school has rightly identified the curriculum as an area for improvement. Staff have had the opportunity to visit other settings to develop their expertise but not always acted well enough upon the advice received. The school has architectural plans to redevelop parts of the building to cater better for the children but these are a long way from fruition.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

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Views of parents and carers

Of those parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire, most are happy with many aspects of what the school provides. Several echo the thoughts of one who wrote, 'My child is blossoming into a confident and thoughtful individual' and note with warmth the staff's 'dedication to the school'. Some note, 'The school meets/exceeds traditional expectations. They excel at extending the attainment of talented pupils in sport and music.' All say that their children enjoy school and that they feel well informed about their progress, which they think is good. They also believe that teaching is effective and that the school is successful in enabling their children to lead a healthy lifestyle. A few parents and carers have areas of disagreement including aspects related to leadership and management, including the role of the governors. A small number believe the school is 'not up to date with contemporary teaching methods' and think afternoon classes are very large. Inspectors believe that most of the areas identified by the parents and carers are satisfactory and that pupils grow in confidence and many do well in sport and music.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Longstone CofE 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 127 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	73	14	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	80	9	18	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child’s progress	25	49	26	51	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	59	19	37	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	75	12	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	31	61	13	25	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	73	13	25	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)	31	61	14	27	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	35	69	14	27	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	57	18	35	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	49	20	39	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	55	17	33	1	2	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	41	80	10	20	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.



20 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longstone CofE Primary School, Bakewell, DE45 1TZ

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. A special thank you goes to the group of pupils who I chatted to and who shared their views about the school. I really enjoyed hearing you sing and was particularly impressed with the wide variety of instruments you play in the school orchestra. The inspection team judged your school to be satisfactory. This means that it is doing some things well and there are things it could do better.

This is what we found out about your school.

- When you leave school the standards you reach are above average.
- You do very well in music and sport.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and opportunities to take on responsibilities in and around school.
- Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent as is the effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion.
- Most of you make at least satisfactory progress overall.

To improve your school further, I have asked those in charge to make sure that:

- the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage take part in a wider range of interesting and practical activities that are suited to their age
- your lessons are carefully planned so that you can make more progress especially in mathematics
- senior leaders check the work of the school more thoroughly to see how you are doing and what needs to be improved.

You also all have a part to play in helping your school by making sure that you always join in discussions and that your work is neatly presented.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall
Lead inspector

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