

Ladygrove Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131904
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	381422
Inspection dates	9-10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Mo Roberts HMI

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Forgan
Headteacher	Mr David Burrows
Date of previous school inspection	19-20 September 2006
School address	Avon Way Didcot OX11 7GB
Telephone number	01236 519235
Fax number	01235 512658
Email address	head.2609@ladygrove-park.oxon.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons and saw 16 teachers in all. They also saw parts of other lessons. Meetings were held with a governor, senior and middle leaders and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at the pupils' work and scrutinised the school's development planning, tracking and assessment information and files related to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Health and safety audits were also reviewed. Questionnaires from 153 parents and carers were analysed as well as those from pupils and staff.

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

- Pupils' writing, especially Key Stage 1, to see why data suggest that it was relatively stronger than reading and mathematics.
- The effectiveness of assessment procedures, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The impact of governors and staff on the drive for excellence and how this helps the school develop new leaders.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school serving a suburban community. Relatively few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A smaller-than-average number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, new to learning English or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The governors run a breakfast and after-school club.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Ladygrove Park Primary School is outstanding because the school leadership is innovative and relentless in its drive for improvement. Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 is significantly above the national average in English and mathematics with many pupils reaching the higher level (Level 5) in reading and mathematics; however, fewer pupils reached this level in writing this year. As a result of recent changes, pupils in Year 2 achieved writing scores significantly above the national average last year and reading and mathematics were at the national average and developing well, showing pupils making a good start to their learning. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about the importance of keeping themselves healthy, active and safe. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is outstanding and all benefit from being part of this harmonious school community.

The curriculum is vibrant and engages pupils exceptionally well so they are keen to learn and come to school. Attendance is excellent and the strong link with parents and carers is a key factor in the school's continued success. The governors run events such as the current road safety initiative and are increasingly making themselves well known to all staff and parents. They also participate in the very effective 'school improvement' teams with each governor taking responsibility for an area of the school improvement plan.

In the vast majority of lessons observed, teaching was good or outstanding and all lessons were based on detailed planning for the specific needs of the children in each class. Teaching assistants work closely with these plans and offer good targeted support. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Occasionally, tasks and questions are insufficiently open ended to fully extend children's thinking, especially for the most able pupils. The Early Years Foundation Stage has effectively built a new team recently and offers pupils a good start to their education. Like the rest of the school the early years assessment system is of high quality but as yet staff in this stage and Year 1 do not always fully utilise their observations to determine the exact next steps for a child within their rich overall programme.

The school successfully nurtures future leaders and staff are exceptionally enthusiastic about their work. Partnership work with external organisations is outstanding. The headteacher's quiet methodical approach ensures staff have excellent opportunities to trial well-researched ideas and methods to further enrich the education of pupils. Teachers move year groups regularly and so become even

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more familiar with how children of all ages learn. The school's improvement since the last inspection, together with its accurate and rigorous self-evaluation, shows that the capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - in Key Stage 2, raising attainment in writing to the same high levels as in reading and mathematics
 - challenging potentially high-attaining pupils right across the school to think even more for themselves by developing teachers' questioning skills and setting a few more open-ended tasks
 - in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1, using assessment more effectively to set pupils' next steps in learning and to encourage them to communicate with a broader vocabulary about what they have learned.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' test results are high in English and mathematics and those of all abilities make good progress. New pupils settle quickly. There are no groups of pupils who underachieve but occasionally individual pupils, especially the most able, do not always make the rapid progress of which they are capable as tasks are not always open ended enough to provide sufficient challenge. Pupils' special educational needs are mostly related to moderate learning disability or behavioural and emotional issues and these pupils are well supported. Pupils respond to teachers' high expectations and clear instructions by behaving impeccably. They take pride in their work and their achievements in the numerous well-attended after-school clubs, as well as in homework activities. The school's programme celebrating these wider achievements successfully supports the pupils' interest and determination. They are also involved in the local community through various events and the quality of their musical knowledge and appreciation is high. Pupils get on very well together regardless of background or ability. They have a strong sense of fairness and are keen to see fair play and justice and to be buddies, supporting others on the playground. Pupils develop excellent working habits and work well in pairs, including when learning their letter sounds. Their basic skills and competent use of information and communication technology ensure they are well placed for the next stage of learning. Their high level of skill gives them an excellent foundation for their future lives and economic well-being. Both good citizenship and care for the environment are well fostered in the democratic school atmosphere. Pupils can assess risks and know how to keep safe; for example, they are well aware of the dangers associated with the local roads and the sometimes overly impatient commuter traffic. The school's approach fosters youngsters who are willing to think for themselves and are confident to undertake challenging activities including running the school on 'Takeover day'.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The rich and stimulating curriculum is well linked to pupils' interests. Links with the international community are strong and broaden pupils' experiences and knowledge of the world; there are language links with a school in the Alps. Consequently pupils understand the issues faced by people in different places. The rainforest work, together with that on the local forest skills, also adds an excellent understanding of protecting the planet's eco system. Pupils also raise money for those affected by natural disasters. The school is a vibrant place with numerous high quality displays supporting learning and enquiry.

Teachers and their assistants have an exceptionally good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Their lesson planning is meticulous and shows how different pupils are challenged and supported. Teachers adapt as they go along but occasionally over-direct the learning, particularly of the most able. Class and pupil management skills are consistently excellent and contribute to the exemplary behaviour of pupils. Teachers are astute at assessing pupils' progress and they do not hesitate to re-teach or review if pupils have difficulties. Pupils showed delight when they eventually, for example, mastered their mathematics tasks. In an outstanding lesson observed, the teacher successfully kept everyone enthralled in deciding exactly how they would go about accurately weighing a lion! Teachers' fairly consistent written responses to pupils' work help pupils to improve. Pupils have time to respond to advice and are exceptionally self-motivating and independent; they try to improve their own learning as they move up the school. Peer assessment and evaluation are of a high quality and help develop learning

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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further. Pupils are very keen to improve their spelling accuracy as teachers set high expectations. Pupils are crystal clear about what they are aiming for in terms of their learning targets. This was obvious within their writing; it is clearly improving in the oldest classes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given excellent in-class support and the records kept of individual progress are of a very high standard, especially those seen in Key Stage 1. In the few lessons seen that were no better than satisfactory, the overall rate of progress was slower. The school is working hard to improve this small inconsistency so progress is more even across the school.

Staff know their pupils well and as a result the care, guidance and support given are excellent. Transitions are exceptionally smooth when pupils move on to the next stage of learning. Registration procedures and punctuality are also good. Support for the most vulnerable is thoughtful and carefully choreographed between agencies to bring about positive outcomes. Where parents need help with pupils' particular needs, such as challenging behaviour, a strong joint school-parent team approach is adopted.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's management and leadership are highly effective. The team comprised of the headteacher and two deputies is determined that all pupils' academic and personal needs are met, and they ensure that the entire staff has a strong democratic voice in achieving these goals. The school is a cohesive community and plans more links with other schools nationally; pupils take an active part in charity work both nationally and internationally. The governors have their own learning and development plan and support the school well even though a number are new and there are currently some vacancies. Nevertheless they challenge the school effectively through their increasing level of involvement. All requirements for safeguarding are met and procedures are effective.

Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its numerous strengths, and overall effectiveness has improved from good to outstanding, due in part to especially well-targeted professional development for staff. The school has an excellent capacity to get even better as it has maintained high standards over many years and tackles any minor dips or issues robustly. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively. The school works exceptionally well with its partner

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institutions, including the recent support of a school through the loan of skilled staff and by its work with local teacher education establishments. Their cluster approach to interrogating each establishment’s self-evaluation leads to robust and rigorous ongoing self-evaluation and prompt action to deal with issues as they arise.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start in the school’s Nursery and when they start in the Reception Year, their skills and knowledge are broadly average for their age in most respects. Children make good progress irrespective of their gender or background because the teaching is good in both directed and free-choice activities. Superb literacy work was seen in a large group activity developing children’s understanding of an adventure story; everyone listened intently and enjoyed the joint staff re-enactment of an exciting book. Children confidently develop their independence by undertaking a wide range of creative activities. They are also keen on counting.

Children enjoy their learning and develop good personal qualities such as concentration and thoughtfulness towards others. For example, they were observed learning about space food and were happy to take turns and guess what space explorers eat. Children know a good deal about how to stay fit and healthy through eating their daily fruit and taking regular exercise in their challenging outdoor area. The bicycles with passenger seats encourage cooperative play successfully and the slope with wheeled gliders really tests children’s developing agility. Overall provision is good and early reading skills are well taught with children moving on to different level groups appropriately. Most pupils are confident speakers and report clearly on the activities they have enjoyed. The current system allows for plenty of choice as well as focused activities. However there are a few missed opportunities to guide children towards activities that will build swiftly on their past learning and to talk

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about their new experiences. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children’s safety and welfare are excellent, including for those who attend the breakfast or after-school club. Very useful links are made between the children's learning in school time and after-school time. There are strong relationships between staff and parents and carers, who are rightly pleased with the quality of provision and support their children receive.

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 are very happy with the school. Additional comments on the returned questionnaires were almost all positive and strongly supported inspectors’ findings that this is a school which is thriving and delivering a high standard of education for all. Inspectors looked at the few criticisms of the school made by a very small minority of parents and carers but during the inspection could find no evidence to support them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ladygrove Park 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 153 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	122	80	30	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	111	73	40	26	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	86	56	64	42	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	91	59	55	36	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	100	65	52	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	92	60	56	37	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	99	65	51	33	2	1	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)	82	54	59	39	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	90	59	56	37	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	73	48	68	44	8	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	47	70	46	2	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	112	73	39	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	116	76	36	24	1	1	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.



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ladygrove Park Primary School, Didcot OX11 7GB

It was lovely to come to your school and to see you working and playing so well. A special 'thank you' to the pupils who came to talk to the inspectors and to the ones I spoke to on the playground.

We found you go to a great school and we use the word 'outstanding' to tell everyone just how good it is!

We especially liked:

- how well you behave and how good you are at helping each other and thinking for yourselves
- how well your teachers and teaching assistants are helping you to learn – most of your lessons are good or outstanding
- how well your headteacher and his team keep the school running smoothly and keep looking for new ideas to constantly improve the school to make sure you all get a chance to do your best
- the fact that you reach standards in English and mathematics well above those in most other schools right across the country by the time you leave in Year 6
- the exciting work and topics you cover such as the re-enactment of the Egyptian funeral procession.

We challenged teachers to get even more of Year 6 to Level 5 in writing. Then we asked them to see if they can give you extra open-ended tasks and to make sure they ask enough questions that really stretch your thinking so that you make even more progress in all classes. We also want them to see how younger ones can be encouraged to talk more fully about their learning.

Congratulations on your super attendance rate – please keep it up!

Best wishes

Mo Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector

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