

Longleaze Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	126262
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	381200
Inspection dates	2–3 May 2012
Lead 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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Hopkins
Headteacher	Clare Pickard
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 November 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson

Additional inspector

Peter Lawley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed nine teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils, and spoke with a few parents and carers bringing their children to school. There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to take into account when planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work, heard a sample of pupils read and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 70 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Longleaze is a smaller than average primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and a few speak English as an additional language. A very few pupils are of Traveller heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is high compared to most schools. The school manages an integrated specialist learning centre on its site for pupils with complex needs, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. These pupils are taught in classes in the main school for about half of each week. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. It has been awarded Healthy Schools Status.

The school has been affected by a number of staff changes and lengthy absences over the past two years; there have been four headteachers/acting headteachers. At the time of the inspection, the substantive headteacher had been in post a few weeks and there was an acting deputy headteacher.

Wootton Bassett Children's Centre and Longleaze Pre-school share the school site. These are not managed by the school and therefore were not inspected by this 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Longleaze is a good school. This is a testament to the hard and effective work of senior and middle managers, and the governing body. Despite the many staff changes, they are driving forward improvement well. The school is not yet outstanding because, although teaching is now good, on occasions the pace in lessons is too slow and not all begin with stimulating activities that capitalise on pupils' good attitudes to learning. Achievement has also improved and is good. Exceptionally good progress is made in reading. However, weaknesses in handwriting and presentation, and few opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in independent problem-solving activities, limit greater progress in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good in all year groups due to the range of effective monitoring procedures and strong commitment of staff to improving their practice. Thorough and rigorous tracking of pupils' progress helps staff meet pupils' individual needs well.
- This is a very inclusive school where not only staff, but pupils themselves, support others for whom learning is difficult. This is also true of pupils in the specialist learning centre. As a result, pupils with a disability or special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and pupils of Traveller heritage achieve as well as their classmates.
- Pupils behave well, enjoy school, feel safe and show good attitudes towards learning. Attendance and punctuality have improved well over the past year, especially for pupils whose previous attendance was too low.
- Staff, pupils, and parents and carers acknowledge the strengths the new headteacher has brought to the school and there is a strong sense of purpose among the whole community. Rigorous monitoring procedures ensure that self-evaluation is accurate. Development planning is successfully tackling weaknesses, with strategies already in place to address those that remain.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - improving the presentation of pupils' written work, especially the accuracy and neatness of their handwriting
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out mathematical problem-solving activities independently in a range of subjects and different situations.

- Accelerate progress and secure outstanding teaching overall by:
 - ensuring that teachers promote rigour and pace in all lesson activities
 - starting lessons with exciting and motivating activities that inspire pupils to do their very best.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good for all groups of pupils, including those with a disability or special educational needs. Parents and carers agree that their children achieve well. Very good progress in reading means attainment in this subject is above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Some weaker aspects in writing and mathematics prevent achievement being higher in these subjects and attainment is broadly average.

Attainment on entry to Reception is below that expected for children's ages and it is weak in some early literacy and numeracy skills. Children make good progress and, although attainment remains below average, by the end of the year the gap with their peers nationally has narrowed considerably. They get off to a good start in reading due to very effective teaching of the links between letters and sounds (phonics) and the excellent promotion of enjoyment in reading, which is true in all year groups. This strengthens pupils' determination to build up new words, so that by Year 2 a large majority read fluently, very confidently and with good understanding. By Year 6, pupils are extremely enthusiastic readers who very effectively discuss the plot and characters in stories.

Reception children begin to write accurately in sentences and, by Year 2, pupils are confident story writers, using connectives such as 'but' and 'because', and including similes and metaphors to enliven their work. The interesting ways they begin and end their stories is evident in those about 'The Magic Guinea Pig'. By Year 6, the quality of pupils' language is very effective, not only in stories, but in factual writing such as that about 'Beach Dangers'. However, in other year groups sometimes work is spoiled by messy presentation and careless handwriting which makes pupils' work difficult to read. Good opportunities for discussion help pupils achieve oral language skills above the level expected for their age.

The drive to improve pupils' calculation skills has successfully raised attainment in

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mathematics. Reception children's secure understanding of simple addition and subtraction is successfully built on, so that Year 2 pupils begin to multiply and divide accurately and use these skills in working with measures. By Year 6, pupils have a very good awareness of place value. This allows them to work accurately with decimals or percentages and to solve problems set by the teacher well. However, pupils are less skilled at working on a problem where they have to decide how to organise and solve it themselves. This is because in most classes they have few opportunities to do so in other subjects.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school because staff have eagerly adopted 'non-negotiable requirements' for lessons which have ensured there is a consistent approach in nearly all aspects. This has helped ensure that important literacy and numeracy skills are consistently well taught, especially in reading. Parents and carers are concerned about the many staff changes, although the very large majority agree their children's needs are met and their progress is good. The main reason limiting further improvement in the quality of teaching is the tendency of teachers to talk too long or to direct pupils too much, so that sometimes learning lacks rigour and pace. Pupils report that they greatly enjoy the stimulating starters; for example, when they watch a slide show or when an adult dresses up as a character, and pupils recognise that these inspire them to work harder. However, they say starters of this quality do not happen often enough.

Most features of teaching are good and are key factors in pupils' improved achievement. Underpinned by a good curriculum, activities are well matched to the stage at which individual pupils are working. Teaching assistants are directed well so they provide good support for pupils, including those with a disability or special educational needs. Pupils in the special learning centre are well taught, both in the centre and in class lessons because activities are well focused on their specific needs. Very regular and rigorous tracking helps ensure activities are continually adjusted to meet pupils' needs and the personalised learning programmes for pupils in the specialist learning unit are especially effective, ensuring progress is good.

During lessons, teachers regularly intervene to address misconceptions or set new challenges. However, the more-able pupils pointed out that sometimes they have to listen to advice that they do not really need and this slows their rate of progress. The new marking scheme and use of individual and lesson targets mean pupils consistently get good advice on how to improve. A particular success has been the challenging questions of 'What, why and how?' set at the beginning of lessons to help pupils understand their learning. Good opportunities for discussion encourage progress, enhance pupils' oral language skills and foster reflection, which promotes their spiritual and personal development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Moral and social development, founded on the need to respect others, is promoted

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well. This, together with well-established rewards and sanctions to encourage positive behaviour, ensure pupils' behaviour is typically good, and relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils are harmonious. During the inspection, the behaviour of all pupils in lessons and around the school was very good. A small minority of pupils and their parents and carers expressed concern about behaviour in lessons and a few incidences of bullying, associated with name-calling or rough behaviour, that were not dealt with swiftly enough. However, the pupils and parents and carers spoken to were adamant this is not a major concern and mainly associated with past events. They report that the few interruptions in lessons and very few bullying incidents are dealt with successfully and do not impede learning. Pupils say they feel safe in school.

Pupils relate well to each other and their teachers. This engenders a positive learning environment so that pupils enjoy school and work well in paired or group work. They are confident enough to help assess each other's work and to come to a consensus about group activities. Their positive attitudes benefit attendance levels well, especially for pupils who find school work hard. This is also enhanced by the strong empathy pupils have for each other, demonstrated in the spontaneous clapping for the contribution to a lesson made by a pupil who speaks very little English. Pupils have a good awareness of how to assess risk and avoid hazardous situations, including when using the internet.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has quickly gained the full confidence of the school community, strengthening liaison with parents and carers and other partners, most notably the adjacent children's centre. Parents and carers praise the way leaders are improving the quality of their children's education. The school is proud of, but not complacent about, its success and there is a strong culture of continuous improvement. Good self-evaluation is supported by effective reflection on pupils' progress not only in whole-school improvement planning, but that related to subjects and individual year groups, and so strategies are continually adjusted. The leadership of teaching is good. The quality of teaching is very regularly reviewed through observations, scrutiny of planning and pupils' progress meetings. This, together with very effective teamwork, the sharing of expertise and peer support and coaching, has enhanced practice, although some inconsistencies still remain.

Following a period of turbulence in staffing, senior leaders, including those newly appointed or in temporary positions, and literacy and numeracy subject leaders, are leading the school well. The governing body provides exceptionally good support and challenge in helping staff to address weaknesses. Members' considerable expertise and commitment are of great benefit to the school, not least in key staff appointments. These strengths have delivered good improvement since the last inspection and ensure the school is well placed to improve further.

The curriculum is good and ensures that all pupils, whatever their needs or talents, have equality of opportunity. They achieve well due to the school's determination

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that discrimination in any form will not be tolerated. Activities are interesting and very relevant to pupils' lives so they develop positive attitudes to learning. The curriculum supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well; encouraging pupils to develop a respect for others, for example from different religious groups, although the opportunities for first-hand experience of this are limited. The curriculum has been considerably strengthened over the past year through links with other schools, most notably Longleaze Pre-school where liaison supports Reception children's learning well. Staff are very aware of how the curriculum needs to be adjusted to improve achievement in writing and mathematics, although the full effect of some strategies is not as yet evident. Effective measures to prevent or deal with bullying, and procedures for the vetting of staff and child protection, ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



4 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longleaze Primary School, Swindon SN4 8BA

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 read or gave up their time to talk to us. We have judged your school to be good, and the views of you and your parents and carers indicate that you think so too.

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

- Achievement is good, including for those pupils who find learning difficult. You do really well in reading where your attainment is above average and you are making good progress in writing and mathematics.
- Behaviour is good and you get on well together. We are very impressed by the way that you help and support other children.
- Teachers plan interesting activities and teach you well, especially in reading. You are good at working with others in lessons and using your targets to help you improve.
- You enjoy school and work hard, and we are pleased to see that the number of absences is decreasing and more of you arrive in school on time.
- Your headteacher, staff and members of the governing body have helped your school to improve well.

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

- We have asked staff to make sure you improve the presentation of your work, especially your handwriting, and to give you more opportunities to use your mathematical skills to solve problems. All of you can help by working really hard at these things.
- We judge that teaching could be even better if you did not have to sit too long listening to the teacher, and if more lessons started with really interesting activities that encourage you to do your very best.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson
Lead inspector

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