

Lacock Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	126333
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	381215
Inspection dates	18–19 June 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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Hallett
Acting Headteacher	Luke Maddison
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2007
School address	High Street Lacock Chippenham SN15 2LQ
Telephone number	01249 730271
Fax number	01249 730271
Email address	admin@lacock.wilts.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited nine lessons, observed six teachers or classroom assistants and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. A few parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken with. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey when planning the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work, heard a sample of pupils read and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, development planning and monitoring information, a range of policies and procedures, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. The questionnaires returned by 59 parents and carers were also scrutinised.

Information about the school

This is a primary school of much smaller than average size, where pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a few speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has met the current floor standards, which set the minimum standards expected by the government. Since the last inspection, there has been a complete change of staff and several lengthy staff absences. Currently, the school is led by an acting headteacher.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- Lacock Church of England Primary is a satisfactory school. Staff changes and absences made it difficult for the school to keep a check on the quality of provision and pupils' progress. Consequently, both declined. With strong leadership from the acting headteacher and the full commitment of staff, things have now turned around. Improvement over the past year has been rapid, a fact acknowledged by pupils, parents and carers. However, the full effect of the hard work by staff on pupils' achievement is not yet apparent and more needs to be done, especially in writing. This is the main reason why the school is not yet good. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but rising quickly. Children in Reception make good progress. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is improving in other year groups. Reading has improved well, partly due to its higher profile, but achievement in writing has been slower to catch up, partly because pupils have had insufficient opportunities for writing in real contexts and to learn how to use some types of descriptive language.
- There has been considerable improvement in the quality of teaching over the past year, with lessons observed during the inspection being at least good. However, evidence taken from pupils' progress and scrutiny of work indicates that teaching is satisfactory.
- Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps ensure that pupils behave well. Pupils enjoy their learning and they are well aware of how to keep safe.
- Changes and absences, especially at senior leadership level, have been a major barrier to driving forward improvement. However, the acting headteacher has shown considerable skill in setting up systems to support self-evaluation and development work, ensuring that the school is accurately targeting weaknesses. Very effective teamwork amongst staff and the governing body means that

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weaknesses are now being tackled successfully. The strong determination to address those that remain means that the school is now securely placed to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing, through:
 - introducing a range of strategies to improve the profile of writing to equal that now seen in reading
 - increasing pupils' opportunities for writing for a real purpose
 - ensuring that more pupils use a range of features such as alliteration, similes and metaphors to enliven their written work.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by:
 - providing more opportunities during lessons to review the work of different groups so that focused support or a greater challenge can help to increase their progress
 - ensuring that the systems recently introduced in writing lessons, which involve pupils in checking and assessing their own work, are extended and adopted in other subjects.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry to Reception is generally below that expected for children of this age. The good curriculum and skilled teaching ensure that children make good progress and most reach average levels by the time they enter Year 1. Scrutiny of tracking and pupils' work shows that, across other year groups, pupils' progress is satisfactory. This is also the case for pupils who may be at risk of underachieving, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. However, they are beginning to close the gap with other pupils, especially in reading. The very large majority of parents and carers agree that their children make the progress they should. By the end of Year 6, attainment is average.

Strategies to raise the profile of reading, such as certificates for the number of books read, strengthening the range available and opportunities to read to members of the community are raising attainment well. Currently average, both at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, it is well placed to rise further. Younger pupils confidently build up words from sounds (phonics), with older pupils exhibiting a good awareness of comprehension and different genres of texts. Pupils whose progress slows benefit considerably from regularly reading aloud to visitors. Average attainers, despite reading fluently, are sometimes not as confident. Attainment in writing has also improved, with most Year 2 pupils spelling accurately and using the correct punctuation. The books they are writing on 'Marvellous Medicine' indicate an improving use of vocabulary. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to write effectively in different formats such as letters, diaries or instructions. The

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'spooky stories' they wrote as the result of a visit to the cloisters in Lacock Abbey show that they use language well to develop suspense. Their use of adjectives, adverbs and connectives helps engage the reader, although few make good use of features such as alliteration or metaphors. In addition, there are too few opportunities for writing for a real purpose; such as the letters pupils wrote to the Queen for the Jubilee.

Over the past two years, a strong emphasis on developing calculation skills has ensured that, by Years 2 and 6, most pupils use these well when working, for example, with measures or data and reach the levels expected for their ages. Attention has now turned to ensuring pupils become as skilled at solving problems, which is helping to raise attainment further and increasing the number of pupils exceeding expected levels. Currently, attainment in mathematics is broadly average and rising. A strong emphasis on developing information and communication technology skills as a tool for learning is enhancing achievement, including in homework activities through using a subscription-based web site.

Quality of teaching

Until fairly recently, there were inconsistencies and inadequacies in teaching and assessment that had an adverse effect on pupils' learning, with some making little progress at times in previous years. Although teaching has improved and all lessons observed during the inspection were at least good, the legacy of underachievement remains, and records of pupils' progress and scrutiny of their work indicates teaching is satisfactory.

Parents and carers are very pleased with the improvements made, one typically commenting, 'Over the last few months, significant steps have been made to improve teaching'. Currently, assessment is accurate and regular, providing a clear picture of each pupil's progress, so that when it slows or accelerates activities can be adjusted appropriately. This has also ensured that planning for both lessons and the longer term is now much more effective, with activities well targeted at the different ages and abilities in each class, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Staff have worked extremely hard to ensure that pupils benefit from a consistent approach. The strong promotion of spiritual and social development has a marked effect on pupils' ability to cooperate and reflect, evident in the paired work in lessons which helps pupils to check their answers or test out ideas. Teamwork amongst teachers and classroom assistants is now very good, ensuring pupils do not miss out by being in mixed-age classes. Phonics is increasingly well taught, and exceptionally well linked to spelling and vocabulary development. Although different forms of writing are effectively taught, there are too few opportunities for pupils to do so in real contexts, which limits their progress.

During the inspection, pupils were clear about what is expected of them and why, and all were aware of their individual improvement targets, features which were not always seen previously. Continual assessment is becoming an integral part of learning, with teachers regularly intervening during lessons to check how well pupils

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are doing. However, teachers miss the opportunity to focus this on specific groups to ensure that pupils receive well-targeted advice on how to improve. In the older classes' literacy lessons, the way in which pupils are involved in identifying what they need to learn and then assessing whether they are meeting the required criteria is beginning to bring about very positive improvement. However, this is relatively new and not seen in other subjects.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Good moral and social development helps ensure pupils behave well in and around the school. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying and report that any incidences, largely associated with general name-calling, or unsatisfactory behaviour, are speedily and successfully dealt with and do not adversely affect their learning. A few parents and carers raised concerns about poor behaviour, but most feel behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe and happy in school and develop positive attitudes to their work, very much enjoying the many opportunities to take part in village and local events. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good so that pupils want to work hard for their teachers and work together well in paired or group work. Pupils are unfailingly polite, friendly and helpful to visitors, and are very proud of their school. Pupils are good at judging when they should or should not take a risk, for example with regard to road or fire safety. Their knowledge of how to keep safe when using the internet and how to avoid cyber-bullying is very good. Effective monitoring ensures that attendance levels are average and most pupils come to school on time.

Leadership and management

Despite the difficulties the school has had to address over the past two years, current leadership and management have managed to turn the situation around and address issues seen at its last inspection. This is largely due to the strong qualities exhibited by the acting headteacher, resulting in the school now having systems in place which help staff and members of the governing body to carry out their roles more effectively. Alongside this, he has gained the full commitment of the whole school community, resulting in the effective teamwork amongst all staff that has brought about swift improvement over the last year. Members of the governing body are now well informed and able to challenge and support the school in the way they should. They willingly share their expertise with the school, for example in data analysis.

Rigorous and well-judged self-evaluation has led to improvement planning that is correctly targeted at weaknesses in provision and pupils' progress. Alongside this, the management of performance has much improved, raising both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Professional development of staff over the past year has been especially good, helping to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Issues identified at the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed, with remaining weaknesses already improving, giving the school secure capacity to improve further.

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Improved assessment procedures have helped ensure the curriculum now meets pupils' needs and interests. The way that the village of Lacock and the local area are used to enrich pupils' experiences, for example through the village Jubilee Project, is exceptionally good. Well-established links between subjects help to make learning relevant, although more could be done to improve this aspect in writing. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, for example through assemblies and links with the church and other countries. Clear identification of pupils who are vulnerable to underachievement, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and close tracking of their progress ensures, where necessary, they have specialised programmes of support to help them catch up. The school fully meets government requirements with regard to safeguarding through, for example, the vetting of staff, its child protection procedures and strategies to prevent bullying. This helps to ensure that the school's strong determination to prevent discrimination and provide equality of opportunity is successful.

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.



20 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lacock Church of England Primary School, Lacock, Chippenham, SN15 2LQ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I very much enjoyed my time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. Thank you for telling me about your school, and an special thank you to those of you who gave up their time to speak with or read to me. I have judged your school to be satisfactory, and agree with you and your parents and carers that this year it has improved well.

Here are some of the things that are especially good about the school.

- Reception children get off to a good start and you are all making better progress, especially in reading this year.
- In the lessons I saw, teaching was good although, partly because of all the staff changes, it has not always been as good as this.
- Behaviour is good and you get on well together. You are friendly, polite and helpful, and know lots about how to keep safe, including on the internet.
- Lesson activities now help you to make better progress, and all the visitors you have and visits you make help you to enjoy school and work hard.
- Your headteacher, staff and members of the governing body have made things a lot better this year, and I believe that they will be able to carry on doing this. All of you can help by working as hard as I saw during the inspection.

Here are some of the things the school needs to improve.

- Help your progress to improve more, especially in writing, by giving you more activities where your writing really has a point to it, like the letters you wrote to the Queen for the Diamond Jubilee.
- Make sure that teaching is always at least good, and extend the good things teachers are doing now, especially by involving you in checking your own and your classmates' work. All of you can help by trying to become really skilled at this.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson
Lead inspector

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