

Langtree Community School and Nursery Unit

Fore Street, Langtree, Torrington, Devon EX38 8NF

Inspection dates 12–13 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points and rates of progress have accelerated since the previous inspection.
- All groups of pupils learn well in almost all lessons, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Pupils' reading skills have improved notably.
- Teaching and learning are good because teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations of pupils and develop excellent relationships with pupils. The support provided by other adults is effective.
- Pupils enjoy being in the school and feel safe. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils often show exceptional care for others around the school. Attendance is above average and there have been no exclusions in recent years.
- Excellent leadership by the headteacher has allowed her to create a keen and proficient team of teachers, leaders and managers at all levels. As a result, there have been improvements in both the quality of teaching and in the achievement of pupils.
- The governing body offers effective support and challenge to school leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Some lessons do not allow pupils enough time to use their own initiative.
- Challenge for higher attainers is sometimes not as effective as that provided for other pupils.
- Pupils' knowledge of other cultures and religions is not sufficiently well developed.
- The school does not explain fully how the homework it sets can boost pupils' progress in lessons.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise literacy skills while playing outside in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector who visited eight lessons, and observed four teachers. Two of the lessons were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of other short visits to lessons and to small-group activities.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, a representative from the governing body, the school counsellor and a group of senior and middle leaders. A number of meetings were held with the headteacher. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 18 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and talked to 20 parents and carers who, between them, had 30 children attending the school.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading and analysed work in pupils' books.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at documentation including the school development plan, records of pupils' progress, teachers' observation records, information regarding attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and performance management.
- A new Chair and Vice-chair of the Governing Body have taken up their offices within the last 12 months.

Inspection team

Paul Garvey, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Langtree Community School and Nursery Unit is a smaller than average-sized school of its type.
- All pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, either at school action, school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is close to average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.
- The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Reception class and attached Nursery unit.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion of lessons are outstanding by:
 - providing work that more closely meets the needs of higher attaining pupils, in order to increase their rates of progress in all lessons
 - ensuring that teachers do not talk for too long in lessons, to enable pupils to have more time to work independently and to use their initiative
 - providing more opportunities for children to practise literacy skills while learning outside in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Explain fully to parents and carers the nature of homework that the school expects pupils to complete. Do this especially in the use of information and communication technology and in digital learning, so that parents and carers are fully aware of how it will be used to improve pupils' progress.
- Extend the pupils' knowledge about other cultures and religions in the world.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils join the school, their skills in literacy and numeracy are generally below what would be expected for their age. This can vary from year to year with the small number of children in each cohort. They make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage so that most pupils join Key Stage 1 with skills sufficient to access the National Curriculum. This good progress continues as they move through the school.
- Attainment shows good improvement from the previous inspection and attainment in English and mathematics is now above average.
- Pupils' reading skills have improved and have benefited from a clear focus in all years. The good teaching of sounds and letters in both Reception and in Year 1 allows pupils to enjoy reading a range of books as they progress through the school. Careful tracking of pupils and skilled support from other adults ensure that pupils in danger of falling behind are identified quickly and given effective support.
- Pupils progress rapidly in all subjects as the skills learned in reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology are applied well across the varied curriculum. In a science lesson, pupils' discussions around the theme of circuits and conductors developed well, as the lesson introduction had been enlivened by pupils demonstrating the workings of their own remote-controlled battery-driven toys. Pupils then went on to build their own circuits. They could discuss what was needed with good knowledge of how electricity was conducted around that circuit.
- The needs of pupils who may be disabled and those who have special educational needs are well met through teachers' good planning. Their emotional needs are addressed especially well through caring relationships, allowing them to make progress commensurate with that of their classmates. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make progress commensurate with that of other pupils.
- In some lessons, pupils of higher ability do not make the rapid progress made by their peers. This happens when teachers do not cater for their needs by planning tasks that are closely matched to their abilities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching was seen to be almost always good, with examples of outstanding teaching.
- Where teaching is at its best, pupil engagement is highest and progress is most rapid. In these lessons, a combination of excellent subject knowledge and imaginative planning leads to very rapid progress for all pupils. In a mathematics lesson in a class with a mixture of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, pupils were expected to be able to add double digit numbers in Spanish. Pupils readily accepted the challenge, demonstrating first-class prior learning in a modern foreign language while also practising their numeracy skills with alacrity, so that all abilities made excellent progress.
- There are not yet a sufficient number of outstanding lessons being taught to develop outstanding achievement among enough pupils. Where the rate of progress slows, it is due to teachers extending their explanation of the task and subject for too long, rather than allowing a swift progression to pupil activities. Thus pupils have less time in which to use their own initiative to achieve their expected learning outcomes.
- Assessment has improved strongly since the last inspection and now allows leaders to rigorously monitor pupils' progress and to target interventions accurately to boost progress where necessary. This is especially true in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the school has developed an effective and robust system of recording and assessment.
- The headteacher and subject leaders monitor the quality of teaching well and are thus able to demonstrate clear improvements in teaching and learning over time. Other adults

support pupils well in classrooms and in working with pupils in small groups, modelling good social and moral education.

- Teaching assistants and the Nursery leader showed patience and good listening skills which allowed new arrivals to mix and play happily. As a result, children were making good progress in speaking and listening. However, the good quality of literacy stimuli evident in the classroom was not matched by those in the outdoor environment. Thus children were not always as well encouraged to practise reading and writing skills while outside in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Homework is set regularly, monitored over time and marked well. Nonetheless, the value of homework in aiding the progress of pupils in class, especially in the area of using information and communication technology and digital learning, has not yet been well enough explained to parents and carers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Discussions with pupils showed they enjoy being at Langtree and the overwhelming majority of their parents and carers agree. Thus pupils behave well and feel safe in school. In consequence, their attendance is above average.
- Behaviour around school is often exemplary, especially at breaks and lunchtimes, where pupils of all ages play together and engage in a good range of physical activities in the spacious and well-resourced school grounds.
- Behaviour in class is good, but is not outstanding, as the teaching engages pupils outstandingly well only in the very best lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils show marked consideration for each other. One boy in Nursery was observed lifting the front wheels of a classmate's pram and doll into the activity shed (their 'house') where other children were playing. The girl responded with a 'thank you' and the happy role play continued. Others waited their turn patiently to engage in activities, encouraging their classmates as they did.
- Teachers and other adults make excellent relationships with pupils and this high degree of care extends to older pupils taking responsibility for the care of younger ones through mixed-age 'family groups'. Pupils spoke highly of these groups and said that they were important in helping them to feel safe.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying and the difference between bullying and falling out, but they were adamant that bullying is absent from the school. Pupils say there is always someone to turn to for help and that any concerns placed in the 'worry box' are always acted upon and quickly alleviated.

The leadership and management are good

- The excellent and inspirational leadership of the headteacher has allowed her to forge an effective leadership team which has effected good improvements in all the areas the school was asked to improve at the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching has improved strongly with recent appointments. This has allowed pupils' progress to quicken and standards to rise. The progress of individual pupils is now tracked rigorously.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- Self-evaluation is robust. Performance management clearly leads to well-targeted professional development, which is appreciated by staff. This has contributed well to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Salary progression is closely linked to improvements in teaching quality of individuals over time and in the results of their pupils.
- Social and moral education is strong and pupils demonstrate impressively caring attitudes to each other. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities which promote excellent social relations, including a summer residential experience for Years 5 and 6. Spiritual education is well catered for through a wide and well-balanced curriculum and thought-

provoking assemblies that encourage reflection through prayer. Although an annual visit from a culturally diverse school in Essex helps pupils to mix with pupils from backgrounds different to their own, in discussions, pupils showed a less wide understanding of the religions and cultures of other areas of the world.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The school is supported by a capable governing body that gives appropriate support to the school, but which is also prepared and able to challenge and direct. More experience is needed for the relatively new senior members of the governing body to be able to support the school in an outstanding way.
 - Self-evaluation is monitored carefully by the governing body and its knowledge about the school's data and priorities for development is impressive.
 - The governing body carefully monitors finances. Working closely with the headteacher, it has directed money from the pupil premium to areas which have clearly accelerated progress in reading and supported pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113160
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	401347

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	77
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Lewis
Headteacher	Helen Mellody
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 July 2010
Telephone number	01805 601354
Fax number	01805 601354
Email address	admin@langtree.devon.gov.uk

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