

INSPECTION REPORT

LONGFORD C E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Longford, Ashbourne

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112835

Headteacher: Mrs Joy Thompson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Chris Field
9479

Dates of inspection: 25th - 26th February 2002

Inspection number: 197618
Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Longford
Ashbourne
Derbyshire

Postcode: DE6 3DR

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Peter Harvey

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Longford, near Ashbourne and nine miles west of Derby. Pupils who attend the school come from the surrounding area and from a mixture of long-established farming families and from professional families that have moved to the area. All pupils are from white European backgrounds. There are 70 pupils on roll: 34 boys and 36 girls aged between four and eleven years. Children's attainments on entry into reception are typically above average. The profile of the current children's attainments is broadly average. About three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average when compared to other primary schools. Some 14 per cent of pupils have special educational needs that cover a wide range of difficulties. Six of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs and this is a very high proportion compared to other primary schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Longford Primary School is an effective school. The quality of teaching is good overall and this enables all pupils to do well as they strive for their personal best in all respects. Standards are good across the board, with some notable high achievement in writing. This is a result of the school's attention to improving this area of learning. The school has very recently won a Basic Skills Curriculum award because of the good quality of its provision. The pupils develop into caring and responsible young people who get on well with each other and with adults. They are well prepared to take their place in an ethnically diverse society. The good provision made for pupils of all abilities, including all those with special educational needs, enables them to achieve well to reach their individual goals. Parents hold very positive views about the rounded education their children receive within an environment that fosters family values. The headteacher gives very good leadership to the school and other staff and the governors form a united team who are committed to improvement and can show much success in their work. There are two aspects of its work that the school is determined to enhance, and the team judges that its capacity to make improvement is good. Overall, the school's expenditure is very high compared to other primary schools, but in view of the good standards and good quality education it is judged to provide good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed and all staff and the governors join the headteacher in an effective partnership to bring improvement.
- The work is well planned to meet all pupils' needs from the minute they start school and this ensures everyone meets their individual goals.
- The pupils are caring and become responsible young adults who enjoy very good relationships with other pupils and adults.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and this leads to above average standards being achieved across the board; there is some particularly good quality writing at all ages.

What could be improved

- Assessment and its use to set targets for learning are not consistent.
- Subject leaders do not have a full role in the monitoring and evaluation of standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Five key issues were identified by the previous 1997 inspection concerning raising standards and improving teaching in Key Stage 1, raising standards in design and technology (DT) and music throughout the school and the need to continue to address safety issues and classroom accommodation. Since then, the school has made good improvement to all five areas, despite the fact that, with the exception of the headteacher, all the other teaching staff have changed since the previous inspection. A different organisation of classes has been introduced into Key Stage 1; this includes the pupils being taught in a single age class in Year 2 and this is working well. Standards have been much improved since 1997 as shown in the rising SATs results. Pupils' work in DT and music is of a good standard; some DT work seen during this inspection was of high

quality. There has been a major re-building programme that has considerably enhanced the accommodation to an adequate level. However, the classroom used by pupils in Years 5 and 6 is rather cramped and the school has no hall. All health and safety aspects have been fully addressed. The school is in a strong position to maintain the good rate of improvement in the future.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests (SATs).

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A*	C	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	C	D
Science	A	A	A	A

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Similar schools are those schools with up to 8% of the pupils entitled to free school meals. Caution is required however when analysing this data because of the small size of the group who take the SATs.

The standards achieved by Year 6 pupils in the 2001 SATs were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Results overall compared favourably against the performance found in similar schools. There was relative weaker performance in mathematics which school managers explained to inspectors was not unexpected. When set against that seen in similar schools, standards in mathematics were below average and this was largely due to the low proportion that achieved at the higher level 5. The trends over three years show the performance of both boys and girls exceed the national average across the three tested subjects. The standards achieved by Year 2 pupils in 2001 SATs were well above average in all tested areas. When set against results in similar schools, the standards were above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. The school's results in writing placed it amongst the top five per cent nationally.

The data shows that girls' performance in the SATs has been extremely high since 1999, indeed very much better than the boys in school and girls' performance nationally. The school has worked hard to make sure the curriculum is as exciting for boys as girls and is meeting with success. Inspectors found no difference between boys' and girls' very positive attitudes and enthusiasm for work. Pupils in the reception class make good progress because their needs are well understood, the curriculum gives good opportunities for them to explore and investigate and teaching quality is good. Inspection evidence shows a pattern of good standards in all subjects in both the infant and junior classes and all pupils make good progress from their broadly average starting level of knowledge and skill. A close scrutiny of work confirmed above average standards being attained in mathematics throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively and they make good gains in learning. The school sets manageable and realistic targets for attainment that reflect the pupils who comprise each year group. Targets in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 for 2002 are lower than in 2001 but are reasonable given the prior attainment of the pupils. The commitment to improvement in standards is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils want to come to school and they all enjoy their work. Pupils try hard, they work happily and purposefully and take full advantage of the good quality education provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Standards of behaviour are very good in class, at break and lunchtimes. There have been no exclusions during the last two years.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are very good. Pupils' development as independent and responsible learners who show initiative is very good.
Attendance	Very good. The level of attendance is well above that found nationally, though the proportion of parents who take their children on holidays in term-time is creeping up. The school day starts punctually and time is used very productively.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The overall quality of teaching was good in the 24 lesson observations made by inspectors. A quarter was of very good quality. Teaching is almost always very good in English lessons. The teaching of basic skills is a very positive feature. There is no evidence of any unsatisfactory teaching across the subjects pupils learn. Pupils aged from 4 to 11, and regardless of background, share this good quality of teaching. The scrutiny of pupils' past work confirms this picture of good teaching. There are many more strengths in teaching than shortcomings. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the management of pupils, the use of time and resources and the contribution of support staff to pupils' learning are all strengths. Planning and ongoing assessment and pupils' own knowledge of their learning, whilst satisfactory, could be enhanced. Overall, the school meets the needs of all pupils very effectively because it knows each one as an individual. Good quality individual education plans and very well deployed support staff are the key reasons why pupils with special educational needs achieve at the same good rate as their class-mates. All pupils work very productively and show very good levels of independence and maturity as self-motivated learners. Pupils rise to the many challenges provided and use their initiative very well to advance their own learning. Staff told inspectors that it is these very qualities and the pupils themselves that make their life so rewarding as teachers at Longford Primary.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad, rich and exciting and provides pupils with worthwhile learning experiences. The school caters well for pupils in mixed-age classes. The school's strategies for literacy and numeracy are very effective. French is an added extra, as is a good extra-curricular programme that includes a range of visits and visitors. However, some parents would like to see more after school activities provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements are very well supported and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' spiritual development is well fostered and their social, moral and cultural development well provided. The pupils become sensible and mature learners who work together well and develop a good set of principles to live by.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school gives due concern to matters of pupils' health, safety and welfare and provides good one-to-one support and guidance. Assessment procedures have been improved though the use of these to set, share and review targets with pupils and parents could be more consistent. Behaviour and attendance are monitored very effectively.

Partnership with parents	Good. The school strives hard to keep in close personal contact with all parents, most of whom take a very keen interest in the education of their children. The school's consultative approach, for example, in respect of developing the policy on anti-bullying, is a positive feature.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher is a highly effective manager, has a crystal clear vision of the future and leads the school forward with quiet determination and good humour. The staff form a good team who are well focused on improvement. The next step is to draw more people into the process of self-critical review.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are very well informed about the work of the school and are influential in bringing improvement. They have good understanding of the school's performance and they ensure that it is competitive by making good comparisons with other schools and by consulting carefully on what needs enhancing. In this way they ensure that the school upholds the principles of best value very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There is some very good analysis of performance data by the headteacher. Other staff have begun to take a greater role in this analysis. The process of setting targets and the tracking of progress that pupils make could be more consistent.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There are no shortages of staffing or learning resources. Accommodation is adequate though the school has no hall and the room used by Years 5 and 6 is cramped. Finance is managed effectively and additional finance for boosting standards and for the support of pupils with special educational needs is well spent. The school sensibly taps into additional resources, for example Seed Challenge grants, to the benefit of pupils' education. A large carry forward figure in last year's budget is appropriately earmarked for building developments.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • The good standards of behaviour. • Their children like school and are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good and their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not keep them well enough informed of how their children are getting on. • The range of activities outside lessons is restricted. • Levels of homework are inconsistent.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. It judges that homework provision is appropriate and that the extra-curricular programme is suitable given the limited number of staff there are to run activities. School managers are working hard to improve the information provided to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school is well led and managed and all staff and the governors join the headteacher in an effective partnership to bring improvement.

1. Longford Primary School is an effective school because of the overall very good quality of leadership and management. The headteacher has a crystal clear vision for the future of the school that is centred on the needs of all pupils. She leads the school forward with quiet determination and good humour. She knows the strengths and shortcomings of the school fully and has worked very well with the governors and staff to form a partnership that is focused on sustaining what works successfully and making continued improvement to those aspects of the school's work that require enhancement. The headteacher gives very good leadership to the school and does this in a way that enables everyone to feel valued and their contributions recognised in full.
2. The headteacher is supported effectively by a willing and enthusiastic staff team, all of whom have been appointed since the time of the previous inspection. Between them, the three teachers and headteacher co-ordinate the ten subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. This is a heavy workload and one they undertake with energy and commitment. As subject leaders they ensure that the subjects they take responsibility for are well resourced and that any required training is provided. Communication is helped by the small size of school and is free flowing. This is a positive feature in enabling staff to share and exchange ideas. Less well developed are more formal ways of monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and standards. This is made difficult because of the full-time teaching commitments but so far not enough opportunities have been made available to draw more people into the process of rigorous, self-critical review. A useful start has been made in sampling planning and examining pupils' work but the focus for this is more about checking that the planned work covers the programme of study, as opposed to checking the quality of work and the standards being achieved. Co-ordinators are not yet looking critically at different pupils' work and asking the question, "is it good enough?" There is a will to take this next step towards improvement and the staff are not afraid to submit their own work to scrutiny in order to identify what works well and what requires enhancement. All teachers, both individually and collectively, are committed to improvement and are ready to advance this area for development.
3. Governors have very good understanding of what works well and what requires development and they play a strong role in shaping the educational direction of the school. Governors make good use of the available performance data to identify to what degree the school meets its aim of providing the best education for all pupils. They make the necessary checks and evaluations to ensure that the school achieves as well as schools with a similar intake of pupils, whether in Derbyshire or nationally. Governors are equally keen that Longford provides a rounded education that enables all pupils to make best use of their academic and personal talents. One of their own success criteria is that the school should be recognised as an extension of the family; a place in which pupils are encouraged to show respect for themselves and one another and one in which moral values and principles are given high regard. The school is truly inclusive in educational, social and personal terms due to this concern for every pupil as an individual. In this way they ensure that the school upholds the principles of best value very well.
4. The headteacher has monitored the work of staff in the classroom in order to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. This is a well-managed process, but is curtailed by the amount of time available due to her sizeable class-teaching role. In addition, she analyses the data on pupils' performance carefully. This enables a speedy response where pupils' progress is less than expected and helps all pupils to achieve their potential. The systems in place to track progress and give due support to pupils ensure that pupils' final level of performance is the cumulative work of all staff from intake through to Year 6. This is developing as more use is made of the findings of improved assessment, for example, findings from optional tests to inform planning. The process of setting targets and the tracking of progress that pupils make has yet to be embedded across subjects and throughout the school, and is currently more apparent in Year 2 than elsewhere. This is an area for development.

5. The school's budget is put to good use in the interests of the pupils. The school improvement plan is well focused on the core priorities of the school and the identified improvements to standards, the curriculum and the quality of education are all costed efficiently. Extra funding to help pupils achieve at their level of capability is also used well. Thus, pupils with special educational needs or those who require additional literacy support, for example, are taught well and the progress that they make is just as good as their more academic class-mates. The school has secured additional funding from the small schools grants to increase support for information and communication technology and early years education and this is a very positive feature. Additionally, the school has sensibly tapped into additional resources, for example, Seed Challenge grants to support new buildings, to the benefit of pupils' education. A large carry forward figure in last year's budget is appropriately earmarked to pay for this work.
6. The on-going successes of management are apparent the minute a visitor walks into the new reception area and sees the smiling photographs of the staff team and stimulating range of the school's work. As one parent told inspectors, it is also the unsung successes that count, for example, the headteacher put forward a pupil for the "Child of Achievement Award" for his determination in overcoming personal difficulties and the headteacher was quietly very proud when he won this prestigious award.

The work is well planned to meet all pupils' needs from the minute they start school and this ensures everyone meets their individual goals.

7. The first impression of the school shows just what this commitment leads to. The youngest children in school have settled well into school routines and already are very confident learners as a result of the good attention the staff give to planning and providing a rich and relevant curriculum. From the youngest children to the oldest, pupils work busily and purposefully and undertake their studies with commitment and enthusiasm because everyone of them is given work to enable personal success. Teachers put in good effort to ensure that the levels and quality of work are matched to individual needs and abilities. Those pupils with particular learning difficulties receive good quality support so that they can achieve at the same good rate as their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are supported in their studies by well-written individual education plans that enable the staff to focus on those areas that will assist in meeting personal goals. Educational care officers working with pupils with statements were observed to be very patient in the way they gave support and encouragement. Their approach was a very positive feature in helping these pupils make good progress against their individual targets, in both their academic, and social development.
8. Pupils who are high achievers are also given good attention to help them reach their potential, for example, the best readers are given the same attention to extend their reading skills as those who struggle. This was observed in a reading session in a lower junior class where pupils worked in ability groups discussing well-chosen texts. The best readers worked independently on a challenging comprehension activity set up by the teacher, sharing views about "Lady Daisy", the doll in the Dick King-Smith novel. They were enthralled by the storyline and very much in tune with the plot. Their ability to dig below the surface of the text was well illustrated as they agreed that *although it would be good for a hundred year old doll to tell you facts that helped you be top in history tests, it would also be very spooky and scary if a doll spoke to you!* Teachers constantly assess the quality of work being produced and adapt the work set for different pupils accordingly. This was observed in a science lesson in upper juniors where the teacher had extra challenges at the ready for those who finished designing their electrical circuit first. The good work of support staff is highly effective and encourages the slower learners to keep up to speed. The good encouragement given to those pupils with particular difficulties is helping boost their confidence to "have a go" and in so doing, everyone sees themselves as good achievers. This was well demonstrated in the work produced by two Year 3 pupils in a religious education lesson. In thinking about the good and bad things about the world, one wrote, "I would like people to stop chopping trees down" and another, "... not to ploot the sea because you just want to throw litter away".

9. The school's track record in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in National Curriculum tests (SATs) in Years 2 and 6 is good. The school is not, however, complacent and is working to extend this proportion. Last year's dip in mathematics performance was just that. Inspectors looked closely at work in mathematics and could see no weaknesses in either teaching or learning to explain the shortfall when set against the test results in English and science. Higher attaining pupils are well catered for at Longford. They are set challenging work and enabled to reach their potential in learning. For example, in a design and technology lesson in an upper infant class the high attaining pupils were very clear in their thinking and not only drew a picture of the puppet but provided a list of the moving parts and materials required to make it. All pupils in the class, irrespective of gender or ability, made very good progress because of the very good teaching and support work.
10. Staff are adept at ensuring that amidst their focus on the extremes of the ability range, those in the middle are not discriminated against. Pupils of average ability are equally well motivated and they work just as productively. Teachers' planning gives careful focus to the needs of the range of ability within their classes and the activities provided are carefully graded to ensure that everyone is catered for appropriately. This is no mean task in view of the mixed-age classes and sometimes means that work is planned across four National Curriculum levels.
11. Boys and girls do equally well in their learning. The school has identified a number of appropriate priorities to maintain the balance of achievement across the two genders. Boys' writing, for example, is an ongoing priority that the school is pursuing very effectively. This focus arose from the careful analysis of SATs results that showed this weaker element. Across the curriculum, opportunities are now planned carefully and provided effectively to enable all pupils to hone their writing skills, particularly in non-fiction writing. During the inspection, whether in lessons or as shown in the scrutiny of pupils' earlier work, there was no significant evidence to show that one gender trails the other in the progress made in learning. This is well illustrated by a piece of writing completed by a boy in Year 6 about life on board ship, "I had an awful day today, an absolutely terrible day. It was raining extremely hard and as soon as I got dressed I had to command Lawson and Evans to get below to man the pumps....".
12. Pupils from different backgrounds are expected and urged to do as well as each other. The school is aware of the white euro-centric profile of pupils and seeks to extend pupils' experiences and understanding about the multi cultural aspects of the world about them through a range of useful studies. For example, pupils have visited a Sikh Gurdwara and Hindu temple in Derby to enable better insights into the beliefs and lifestyle of non-Christian people. The school has a well-conceived programme covering personal, social and citizenship elements that include anti-bullying and race awareness. When talking to inspectors a group of older pupils said that the most important thing to them at school was the feeling of being safe and cared for and the wide range of friendships they enjoyed.

The pupils are caring and become responsible young adults who enjoy very good relationships with other pupils and adults.

13. At the heart of the school's effectiveness is the very high quality of relationships. Staff form very good role models in the promotion of the very good relationships in school. The pupils take their lead from such examples and work together most successfully. Their social and moral development is highly developed and so, lessons are sessions where pupils and staff share very good learning experiences, enjoyment is infectious and expectation is high. This was clearly observed in virtually all lessons, and especially so in Year 5/6 lessons, where pupils work in a very good natured way in a room that is very tight on space and requires them to work sensibly, harmoniously and in an extremely well-organised fashion at all times.
14. Another significant strength is the quality of behaviour. Very rarely during the inspection did teachers have to raise their voices or ask pupils to pay attention. There is a tiny nucleus of pupils who present a challenging face to behaviour, but teachers and other staff deal with this most effectively and so learning is not affected and all pupils continue to do well. Behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school buildings and in the playground. Because the pupils' know the expectation of

behaviour so well, they abide by the wishes of others, respect their rights and behave very well towards them. This was clearly seen in a personal and social education lesson in the reception and Year 1 class where the children formed a circle to consider the importance of the school's code of conduct as part of the wider topic, "belonging to a family". The children showed good understanding of the moral code of the school. In discussing why it is important to be kind, one girl remarked, "We need to be friendly, we need to help each other to play games nicely". The children showed sensitivity to the needs of others in the contributions they made and very mature attitudes for their age. Relationships during the group discussion were respectful and harmonious, and were helped significantly by the well-chosen approach of the teacher who reinforced key points and ensured that everyone took a full part in sharing their ideas and making their views known.

15. Confidence as learners and more generally, as people, is highly apparent about the school. Pupils talk confidently about their interests and hold stimulating conversations with each other and with adults. In an English lesson in Year 5/6, one boy took on the role of fairground manager whilst the rest of the class fired questions at him, making points for and against the development of a fairground in the village. Points were well made by all and a balanced argument evolved despite the pupils' own inclination to want a fairground on the doorstep! About a quarter of the school spoke to inspectors about life at Longford and all of them said the most important aspects were the way they felt known as people in their own right, had space to be themselves but felt cared for and part of the family of the school.
16. It is very evident that the pupils are the prime strength of the school and that they are treated as so. Expectations are high of both academic and personal development.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and this leads to good standards being achieved across the board, there is some particularly good quality writing at all ages.

17. All evidence seen by inspectors, including 24 lesson observations and the scrutiny of a comprehensive range of pupils' past work points to good teaching and good learning. Over four fifths of lessons observed were of good quality and none were unsatisfactory. This good picture is a tribute to the determination and effectiveness of management. Past weaknesses in teaching have been overcome and there are now some very good features to teaching, particularly in promoting basic skills. Indeed, 25 per cent of lessons demonstrated very good teaching and learning, specifically in English.
18. All pupils from four to eleven years share this good quality of teaching. The scrutiny of pupils' past work confirms this picture of good teaching. Overall, the school meets the needs of all pupils very effectively because it knows each one as an individual. Good quality individual education plans and very well deployed support staff are the key reasons why pupils with special educational needs achieve at the same good rate as their class-mates. All pupils work very productively and show very good levels of independence and maturity as self-motivated learners. Pupils rise to the many challenges provided and use their initiative very well to advance their own learning. Staff told inspectors that it is these very qualities and the pupils themselves that make their life so rewarding as teachers at Longford Primary.
19. The strengths of teaching very much outweigh the weaker elements. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the management of pupils, the use of time and resources, and the contribution of support staff to pupils' learning, are all strengths. The classrooms are rich in the number of trained adults in support of learning and all are focused on enabling pupils to achieve to the best level possible. This is a key feature in assisting the good standards being achieved and was well demonstrated in a science lesson in Year 5/6. Four adults, including the class teacher, were in support of 18 pupils who all were confident to have a go at building electrical circuits because of the very good team teaching. All adults were well-informed and well-deployed by the teacher to work with different ability groups. Well-chosen activities and well-timed interventions enabled everyone to rise to the different challenges they had been set and make good progress. The computer was planned for full use during the lesson and gave selected pupils good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of control technology. A specialist teacher who works in school part-time provided very confident and skilful support for these pupils.

20. Teachers ensure that work is well matched to pupils' abilities, lessons are well paced and productive and this results in pupils getting a lot of work done. In otherwise satisfactory lessons, teachers do not share fully with pupils the objectives they have set for learning. In the better lessons observed, the teacher not only introduced the objectives at the outset so that everyone was clear about what they were expected to know, understand and be able to do by the end of the session, but she returned to them at the end of the lesson and asked the question, "how well do you think you have done?" This is good practice that enables pupils to be involved in assessing their own progress and in identifying where improvement lies.
21. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is an aspect that the school has identified itself as needing enhancement and inspectors agree with this evaluation. This is tied into the school's continuing priority to develop target setting and assessment as the prime means of ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of gender or background are doing at least as well as expected and are fully involved in identifying the next steps for improvement.
22. Good learning arises from such effective teaching. Pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding most effectively. They work productively and show very good levels of interest, concentration and independence in learning. Because learning is motivating and fun, pupils work hard and do not feel threatened by the pressure that high expectation could place upon them. All pupils want to succeed, they are well motivated by the award of house-points, they want to share their achievements and they are proud when they do well.
23. Pupils' learning opportunities do not stop at the eleven subjects of the curriculum. Because time is used wisely and links between subjects strong, the school can broaden pupils' experiences effectively. A good range of visits takes place and includes not only local places of interest such as Tissington, Elvaston Castle and Chatsworth, but extended visits to Robin Hood's Bay and London also. The school harnesses the support of people in the wider community to enrich pupils' experiences, for example, Derby County football and cricket clubs support coaching and Powergen personnel have shared their knowledge and expertise in supporting the pupils' work on weather recording and reporting. Links with the church are a very important feature of the good curricular provision.
24. Time is found for French to be taught; although inspectors were not able to see any of these lessons the pupils said how much they enjoy learning another language. The curriculum also makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their growth as human beings. This is often during lessons specifically focused on pupils' personal development, for example, when some pupils took part in Newsround mock elections, but also in other subjects. Year 2's work on life in Tocuaro, is not only giving insights into geographical differences between a Mexican village and the area around the school but also into different people's expectations of what life offers, the similar values held despite background and the contribution that they can make to the well being of others.
25. Children in the reception class work and play very effectively because their curriculum is well planned to provide the necessary experiences in all six areas that comprise the early learning goals. Reception children, as seen during the inspection, are confident and cheerful learners who have many and varied opportunities to explore, investigate and talk about their learning. The development of children's speaking, listening, reading and writing skills is a particular success story. This process starts early as the youngest children in the school are encouraged very successfully to share their ideas and thoughts in expressive ways. For example, in discussion the children speak clearly and with confidence, with well-targeted questions ensuring that all fully contribute. When writing they use good vocabulary to create lively pieces. In the poems that were written after hearing "What is Red" by Mary O'Neill the children produced some good quality work. "Red is sunset, red is an apple that you eat. Red is a bed cover on my bed....." The children make good progress in learning and this serves them well in their journey to build skills, knowledge and understanding as they progress through the school.

26. Standards of achievement have followed a good line of improvement since the previous 1997 inspection; boys and girls have exceeded the national average for the past three years. The standards achieved by Year 2 pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were well above average in all tested areas. In 2001, Year 6 pupils achieved at levels that were well above those found nationally in English and science and average in mathematics. In comparison with schools with a similar rate of entitlement to free school meals, the results although good overall dipped slightly in mathematics. Managers expected this and the targets they had set were met. There are no clear trends in standards as every year the group of children taking the tests are quite different. However, what is clear from the school's own data is that all pupils are reaching the levels of which they are capable.
27. The evidence of the inspection confirms the good standards. Lesson observations, the scrutiny of past work and discussion with pupils all indicate that standards in Year 6 are at above average levels across the board. This is very much due to the factors outlined in previous sections of this report, namely accomplished teaching and learning, a wide ranging curriculum, the keen focus on all pupils' individual needs, good management and very good leadership
28. It is also evident that pupils make good progress through the school. Across the subjects pupils are being given worthwhile experiences that enable them to learn successfully. Writing is one example of where the school has tackled identified weaknesses and made significant improvement to the opportunities provided for pupils, with good outcomes. The range and quality of writing is good. Pupils in Year 2 write letters of apology from the perspective of characters in the traditional tales they have read. Letters from the Giant to Jack and from Goldilocks to the three bears make interesting reading. Pupils are given thought provoking tasks that stimulate good responses, this is equally true for boys as girls. In Year 6 for example, the pupils have written prayers, some of which are about Chinese New Year. As one girl wrote, "The Chinese have a New Year, but not the same as ours, it comes later, in February, and they decorate their home with flowers.....but we all hope New Year will bring changes and happiness in our days, we wish this wherever we live, even when we have different ways".
29. The school sets manageable and realistic targets for attainment in English and mathematics that reflect the pupils who comprise each year group. Targets in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 for 2002 are lower than in 2001 but are reasonable given the prior attainment of the pupils. The commitment to improvement in standards is good. Managers have begun the process of filtering these into the planning, assessment and evaluation of progress made by distinct groups of pupils. A useful start has been made, but the school acknowledges that more work is necessary to sharpen the practice needed to track whether the progress made by pupils matches the expectations of staff across all of the subjects they learn.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Assessment and its use to set targets for learning is not consistent.

30. Staff know that assessment is a priority for enhancement in school. The school improvement plan sets this as a central priority for improvement and good work is afoot to bring greater consistency between subjects in the assessment of skills and knowledge acquisition and the use of the data thus collected. However, there are still things to do to produce a cohesive system of assessment and target setting to enable the tracking of progress against expectation.
31. The process of establishing a consistent pattern of assessment across all subjects and in all years is still in the course of introduction. Assessment in English and mathematics is of good quality and the data produced is used well to follow the progress made by pupils and to eliminate under-achievement. A similar package of assessment to track the development of skills and knowledge in other subjects is less well developed. In some subjects, such as ICT, there is more consistent assessment of progress, but in others the process is often informal and differs from class to class. The school knows this is the case and managers are very determined to make the necessary improvements. Because there is insufficient information, it is not yet possible for staff to set targets in all subjects and to track the progress made.

32. Whilst the overall targets for attainment are known by all staff and all are instrumental in moving pupils towards these targets, their use to set targets for different groups or individuals in each year group is at an early stage of development. Teachers share the learning objectives with pupils at the start of many lessons but there are fewer opportunities for pupils themselves to review and evaluate their own progress at the end of the session. Marking of work does not always focus on progress against the targets and its use to show pupils how to improve could be more consistent.

Subject leaders do not have a full role in the monitoring and evaluation of standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

33. All staff work hard in the interests of their pupils and subject leaders guide the development and improvement of their subjects well. However, not everyone has had the opportunity to observe directly the curriculum, quality of education and standards in other classes. There are good informal systems to help subject leaders gain insights into the strengths and shortcomings of these things. In addition, the headteacher has observed lessons and given valuable feedback to staff in order to make improvement. However, there is not yet a consistent pattern of lesson monitoring and evaluation that subject leaders are party to. The picture of achievement, progress and teaching and learning is thus not as complete as it could be and this gives some scope for inconsistency of practice.

34. School managers have included the enhancement of subject leaders' roles as one of the central priorities in the school improvement plan and are working towards its implementation. They recognise that training in lesson observation and evaluation is the next step forward. The pace of development is being curtailed however because of the heavy teaching commitment of all teachers and the headteacher and the limited scope to release people from their teaching role to undertake other activities. Due to budget limitations this is unlikely to change for the better in the foreseeable future. Staff, however, are ready for the challenges that increased monitoring will bring, and very much see it as a vehicle for improvement in terms of quality learning experiences for all pupils. There is a will and determination to succeed in what remains for the school to move forward and, despite the comments earlier, the prospects are promising.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

35. Longford Primary School provides an effective education for its pupils and attainment levels are above average. School managers are far from complacent and everyone in school works hard for improvement. Two aspects of the school's work could be enhanced. These have been identified by senior managers and included in the school's existing plans for improvement. Accordingly, the school should continue its best efforts to:

- 1. Complete a system of assessment in all subjects that assist the setting, sharing and reviewing of targets for learning for all pupils.**

See paragraphs: 2, 4, 20, 27, 28, 29, 30.

- 2. Involve subject leaders more in the direct monitoring of standards and the quality of teaching and learning.**

See paragraphs: 2, 31, 32.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	15	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	25	62	13	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		70
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	9

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Please Note: Caution is required when analysing the results below due to the very small number of pupils who took the tests.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (100)	92 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	6
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	10	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (75)	73 (63)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	6
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	10	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (70)	74 (67)	100 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	70
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	15.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	54

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-1
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	£
Total income	249,688
Total expenditure	235,857
Expenditure per pupil	3,369
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,285
Balance carried forward to next year	39,116

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	132
Number of questionnaires returned	76

Response Rate: 56.8%

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My Child likes school	52	43	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school	44	44	4	3	5
Behaviour in the school is good	45	51	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	21	55	17	1	5
The teaching is good	43	41	5	0	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	44	33	17	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	59	27	13	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	55	36	3	5	1
The school works closely with parents	47	36	12	4	1
The school is well led and managed	57	32	5	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	51	40	4	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	16	39	35	5	5

NB Rows may not total 100 due to the effect of rounding.