



# Linslade Lower School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109515  
**LEA** BEDFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 278212  
**Inspection dates** 12 January 2006 to 13 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Joyce Cox LI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	First	<b>School address</b>	Leopold Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		LU7 7QU
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 9		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01525372085
<b>Number on roll</b>	213	<b>Fax number</b>	01525372085
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Jamie Riach
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Gilly Donald

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 January 2006 - 13 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278212
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This average size lower school serves the community of Linslade near Leighton Buzzard. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The other pupils are from mixed heritage or minority ethnic backgrounds. Virtually all speak English as their main language with a very small number who speak Polish as their home language. A small proportion of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. An increasing but currently below average number of pupils have learning difficulties and a below average proportion have Statements of Special Educational Need. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Inspectors' views differ from the school's opinion that its effectiveness is good because pupils' standards and achievement at the end of Year 4, although improving are only satisfactory. Pupils make good progress and attain above average standards at the end of Year 2. The school has correctly identified the need to improve pupils' achievement in writing throughout the school. The headteacher is a good leader and together with the deputy has made satisfactory improvement to many aspects of the school since the last inspection. For instance, they have begun to improve the nursery and reception classes organisation and accommodation. Co-ordinators' roles have improved but there is more work to do on developing their knowledge of how to raise pupils' achievements. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Parents and pupils think the school is doing a good job and Year 4 pupils say they find their teachers to be 'really friendly but firm.' Pupils' personal development is good and the school takes satisfactory care of all its pupils. Attendance figures are above average. Children in the nursery and reception classes are settled and behave well. They make satisfactory progress and are in line to attain expected standards. Their achievement is restricted to some extent due to staffing absences and accommodation difficulties. Teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory. The main area for improvement is to make sure that more able pupils have challenging work. The capacity for improvement is satisfactory as demonstrated in the above average test results at the end of Year 2 for the past five years.

### What the school should do to improve further

- continue with the strategies in place to raise standards and achievement in writing throughout the school - improve the provision for children in nursery and reception classes - make sure that more able pupils have challenging work - improve co-ordinators' understanding of how to raise pupils' achievement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards and pupils' achievement are satisfactory. Children start school with average levels of knowledge and skill. They make satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception classes. Children's achievement is restricted because they cannot move easily between the outdoor and indoor environment. In addition, due to long term staff illness, there is currently no permanent Foundation Stage co-ordinator to lead the new team. By the time children join Year 1 their attainment is similar to that normally found at this age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well as a result of good teaching and standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Challenging targets were met in 2005. However, pupils attain higher standards in reading and mathematics than in writing. Standards are average by Year 4 and pupils make satisfactory progress from an average starting point. The progress pupils make from Years 2 to Year 4 has fluctuated over the last five years. The headteacher together with the deputy head

have now improved the way in which pupils' progress is measured and recorded and have succeeded in beginning to raise Years 3 and 4 pupils' achievement. This is particularly evident in improved tests results in writing. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and the few children who speak English as an additional language achieve the same as other pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Children have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to succeed. They are well behaved and enjoy their lessons. Their opinions are taken seriously. Staff show great respect towards children and this creates a good model so that children develop respect for adults and for the achievements of their friends. They take classroom responsibilities seriously and do their best to support the smooth running of the school. Those with special responsibilities, such as the school councillors, perform their duties diligently. Children have good attitudes to learning. They are keen to master new skills and to develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education that helps pupils to understand how to stay safe and maintain healthy life styles. Children have a good appreciation of their responsibilities to the wider community. They raise funds for charities and respond generously to world disasters. The school makes sure that all pupils develop a satisfactory range of basic skills and this makes their economic well-being more likely. Pupils have sensible attitudes to life that prepare them to become valuable citizens. Attendance is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and there are examples of good practice. The main problems with teaching are lengthy lesson introductions and a lack of challenging work for more able pupils. Where teaching is good, it is because teachers use questioning and discussion well to make pupils think carefully. There are targets to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work although these are not yet used consistently in all classes. Work is normally planned to meet pupils' various needs but on occasions there is a lack of challenge which restricts some pupils' achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties enjoy all lessons because they are supported sensitively and effectively by a competent team of talented teaching assistants. The headteacher and the deputy head teacher have worked hard to devise a range of systems for measuring and tracking pupils' progress. This assessment information is beginning to be used to set targets and to direct additional help to individuals or groups. An analysis of pupils' work reveals that the quality of marking varies between classes and pupils are not always told how to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactorily broad and varied curriculum which is relevant to pupils' needs. There is a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills. The school has recently reviewed curricular plans and has developed a good programme of work that promotes full coverage of the National Curriculum. This has provided a secure basis for further development. Teachers are still working towards linking subjects together to create a more cohesive curriculum that can be taught through exploring interesting themes rather than separate subjects in isolation. While the curriculum is effectively planned to match the abilities of average and lower-attaining pupils, inconsistencies in assessment mean that planning for higher attaining pupils is often lacking in challenge, particularly in writing and mathematics, and this slows the progress that they are able to make. The provision for personal and social education is good. Strategies to encourage the well-being of pupils have been carefully woven into the curriculum. The school has a good range of additional physical activities and there is a suitable range of well-supported, extra-curricular activities during the lunch period and after school. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors. An appropriate range of extra curricular activities, such as country dancing and the information and communication technology club extend learning opportunities well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

All staff demonstrate high levels of care and commitment and the pastoral support they provide for the pupils is good. This makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement and personal development. In contrast, although the school has developed its use of assessment, the degree to which teachers use this information to guide pupils in their learning, while satisfactory, remains inconsistent. The school has made a good beginning in setting challenging targets for pupils to aim for in their learning. Rigorous child protection procedures and risk assessments are implemented effectively, and ensure that pupils learn in a safe environment. Good attention is paid to ensuring pupils' health and safety. Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school. Pupils who have learning difficulties are identified rapidly and appropriate support is provided. Teachers share information with parents about children's progress and parents are pleased to support their children's learning, especially in helping them to practise reading.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management is satisfactory overall but the headteacher provides good leadership. She has worked hard since her appointment to begin to improve provision in some significant aspects. For instance, she implemented changes to curriculum and lesson planning. School self-evaluation is satisfactory. Together with the deputy headteacher she has also introduced a system to look at and evaluate the school's

work which successfully highlighted the fluctuating achievement between Year 2 and Year 4. The deputy headteacher has made significant improvements to literacy teaching and learning in the school which has resulted in improved test results in writing at the end of Year 4. Parents and pupils are consulted about school improvement and the vast majority of parents are very happy with what the school provides. The headteacher has also instigated considerable building improvement to create a bright, fresh learning environment, using pupils' suggestions in one area to create a jungle scene. Co-ordinators' roles have improved since the last inspection but as yet they do not have a complete understanding of ways to improve pupils' achievement in their subjects. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The chairman has considerable expertise and knowledge and keeps a close eye on standards and achievement via regular meetings with the headteacher. Other governors are very new to their roles and are currently receiving training. Many of the strategies currently in place to improve the school are relatively new but are beginning to have an impact on raising standards and pupils' achievement. Therefore the capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited. It was a pleasure to talk to some of you and to watch you working and playing. This letter is to tell you about some of the important things we saw. You are lucky at your school because the headteacher, teachers and all the other adults look after you all well. They encourage you to be happy at school, to be healthy and to stay safe and they ensure you have good opportunities to learn exciting new things and have lots of visits and visitors. Your behaviour is good and this makes it easier for the teachers to teach and for you to learn. You told us you are interested in doing different things and like taking part in clubs, trips, assemblies and being on the school council. Your teachers are keen to make the school even better for you. We think that the teachers need to help and support you more to improve your writing. It will also help if the nursery and reception children's indoor and outdoor working space is improved. It would be good if the more able children had harder work to do and if all staff help the headteacher and deputy headteacher to make your work even better in all subjects. It was so good to find out that all of you are happy and doing well at school and that your parents are happy too. Keep working hard and being good at Linslade.