



Longlevens Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115498
LEA Gloucestershire
Inspection number 279608
Inspection dates 26 September 2005 to 27 September 2005
Reporting inspector John Paull RISP

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Paygrove Lane
School category	Community		Longlevens
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL2 0AX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01452 520 061
Number on roll	311	Fax number	01452 520 868
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Stephen Heath
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Dorothy Cox

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Longlevens is a large infant school just to the north of the centre of Gloucester, in an area of mixed housing. Children enter from a range of pre-school settings. Attainment on entry is average. About one pupil in seven has learning difficulties and disabilities (similar to the national figure). The number of pupils whose first language is not believed to be English is lower than in most other schools, but is increasing.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Longlevens is a good school that is improving well. Nearly all parents share this opinion strongly, which is indicated in their responses to the school's own and Ofsted's questionnaires. It provides good value for money, which broadly matches its view of itself. Pupils enjoy coming to school, behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to what is provided for them.

The headteacher, staff and governors work well together, sharing common aims. What they have done already shows that further improvements are likely to continue in the future. Weaknesses that were identified in the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. Some of the systems that they use to check and monitor pupils' progress are rather cumbersome, but they are aware of this and have plans to streamline their approach and to increase flexibility.

Pupils' standards on entry are average, but the range is wide. A lot of care is taken to ensure that pupils receive the attention that they need to achieve well. Teaching and learning are good. By the end of Year 2, pupils have progressed well academically and have thrived personally. Standards in mathematics are often very good and pupils' artwork is another strong feature. However, other aspects of creativity are not always as strongly used to help pupils to understand and enjoy what they do.

What the school should do to improve further

- implement its ideas about new procedures to gather, store and use records of assessment so that conclusions can be drawn more effectively, especially about how different groups are getting on
- proceed with its decision to use creative subjects more prominently in its planning and teaching, so pupils' enjoyment and achievement increases even more.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 2, standards are above average. Pupils do well in reading, writing and mathematics. An improvement since the last inspection has been an increase in numbers reaching a level above what is normally expected. The main reason for this good picture is careful planning of what is taught. Topics that interest young pupils are carefully constructed, so they enjoy what they do, concentrate on learning, and make good progress. This good planning provides many opportunities for pupils to apply what they learn in one subject to their work in others. In this way, they practise and reinforce what they are taught more frequently than would otherwise be the case. Understanding of place value and measurement is often particularly good.

Standards on entry to the Reception classes are average, although wide variations are apparent every year. Several children with physical and other disabilities are admitted. Owing to careful support and encouragement, all these pupils make progress at a good

rate in all areas of learning. A good emphasis is placed on building up their confidence, showing them how to learn and to get on in school. The important areas of language, literacy and work with number are developed strongly, so progress is at a good rate. Children achieve well by the end of their Reception year and nearly all of them begin Year 1 with a thorough grounding in the basic skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and have good attitudes towards their learning. In conversations many said that they enjoy being at school and feel safe. One of them commented, "it is because there are lots of teachers who look after you".

Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Pupils are willing to express their thoughts and ideas in these areas both in lessons and in assemblies. They show consideration for each other and for people in places further afield – as is shown by their involvement in raising funds for the Christmas Shoebox and Asian Tsunami appeals. Pupils are well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society and have respect for those from other cultures.

The school is successful in encouraging pupils to consider their own safety and to act responsibly. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking their turn as a monitor and wearing the yellow top that identifies them. Similarly, pupils talk excitedly about the need to eat healthily and take exercise regularly. They are also gaining the literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that are necessary for their economic well-being later on in their lives.

Attendance is satisfactory, although it has been falling for a number of years, mainly due to holidays in term time. The school has identified this as an issue and action to counter it has begun.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Throughout the school, staff in each of the four classes in each year co-operate effectively, sharing ideas and subject knowledge. This teamwork represents an improvement since the last inspection. It means that basic skills are planned well from the Reception year onwards, producing good teaching and learning. Mathematics, especially, is taught very knowledgeably. In lessons that were observed, a variety of good methods were employed that helped to ensure pupils' concentration. In Year 1, the puppets Matilda and Simon were used very effectively to help pupils to recall what should be done when they carried out a measuring exercise. Learning of this quality is the main reason for pupils' good rates of progress and good achievement through the school. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is very well organised. As a result, information about how these pupils should be taught flows effectively between all staff who work with them, ensuring that they learn well.

Assessment procedures are thorough and produce copious amounts of information to draw conclusions about what pupils need to learn next. Senior managers monitor teaching accurately and take care to feed back findings to staff, so that a good basis exists to improve teaching and learning and to target what needs to be done.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

What is taught is planned carefully, providing pupils with good opportunities to learn what they should and to enjoy their work. Subjects are linked imaginatively around topics and themes, whenever possible. For example, when pupils study traditional stories in literacy hours, they read about Joseph's many-coloured coat in religious education. Then, in design and technology, they make the type of coat that Joseph might have worn. These topics include a good emphasis on learning to stay healthy and safe. Literacy and numeracy receive an appropriately strong emphasis. Increasing the impact of the creative arts to ensure that pupils enjoy learning even more has been prioritised in the school's future planning. It is well placed to succeed with this aim as the development of skills in art and design is already strong.

Good adaptations of work for pupils with learning difficulties ensure that they have clear targets to follow. Resources for pupils with disabilities are of good quality and used effectively.

In the Reception classes, all areas of learning are planned well and each room is similarly equipped with opportunities for role-play, work with sand and water, and with areas for reading and mathematical development. Currently, for example, a Mathematical Zoo is evident in each room, with animals holding a number card.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Everyone in the school plays their part in making this aspect of provision very strong. The environment is secure and happy. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well known and their needs are carefully weighed up and catered for.

Good attention is paid to health and safety during lessons and around the school. Risk assessments are a regular feature of what is done to ensure good support for all. Particular care is placed, for example, on establishing what is required to enable those with physical disabilities to take part effectively in visits off the school's site. Pupils who might be at risk are identified quickly and effective arrangements are put in place to maintain and sustain their welfare, so they keep learning.

Considerable information is gathered and recorded about pupils' individual needs. However, this information is not simple enough to draw conclusions about how different groups are getting on. This is significant, because the number of pupils who enter the school from minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are both good. The headteacher's leadership is strong and she is well supported by her senior staff. The school is managed well on a day-to-day basis and the educational direction and vision are good. Improvement since the last inspection has been maintained at a good rate, because the school takes decisive action to tackle any areas of weakness. Good quality provision in the Reception classes indicates strong management based on good understanding of the needs of young children.

The school improvement plan is a useful document and identifies areas for development that clearly match the school's present position and needs. Last year, owing to staff sickness, it was necessary to slow down the rate of development. Good, realistic decisions were taken about what could and could not be tackled. As a result, plans to improve and simplify assessment systems were not implemented.

The governors are supportive and knowledgeable. They fulfil their statutory duties and challenge the school effectively. They are involved well in drawing up the school's improvement plan. Monitoring procedures that check the quality of teaching and extent of what is taught are thorough and effective.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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 being so helpful and welcoming to the inspectors who visited your school. We very much enjoyed looking at your work and coming to your lessons. We especially enjoyed chatting with so many of you in your classes, around the building and with the group that we met in the library!

What we like most about your school:

we think that you do well in your lessons. Some of your mathematics and your art work is especially good. We also think that you behave well

you are kind and thoughtful and the monitors do a very good job

there are lots of good topics that you study in your lessons

your teachers teach you well and all the adults take very good care of you, helping you to feel safe and sound.

What we have asked your headteacher, the staff and the school's governors to think about next:

to use a better way of checking that all the different groups of children in your classes are learning equally well

making art, music and subjects like them, even more important in your topics.