



Thurnby, St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120166
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280750
Inspection dates 13 June 2006 to 14 June 2006
Reporting inspector Barbara Crane AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Thurnby
Age range of pupils	4 to 10		Leicester, Leicestershire LE7 9PN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2415105
Number on roll	241	Fax number	0116 2415105
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Silvia Bosworth
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Herd

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Thurnby, St Luke's is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England school in a village just outside Leicester. It has an average number of pupils and they leave the school at the end of Year 5. Fewer pupils are identified with learning difficulties and disabilities than in most schools. Most pupils come from a White British background, with about a fifth of pupils coming from other ethnic groups. Few pupils are entitled to free school meals. Children's attainment when they start at the school is above average in most respects but the school's early assessments of children show that they are lower in writing.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Parents rightly feel that it sets their children up very well for the future. It is a happy and vibrant place in which pupils' personal development is outstanding. They do well in their work, thrive and grow up as confident young people who make the right choices about living healthy and active lives. Pupils are well cared for. They say that they enjoy school because 'everyone is kind and people take notice of what you say.' This starts when children join the school, where good teaching for the four- and five-year-olds means that they happily talk about their ideas and use these freely in play and in their work. Older pupils play an important part in shaping the life of the school because they have so many opportunities to air their views and make a difference. The good curriculum is enhanced by plenty of clubs and activities outside normal lessons that contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils use computers confidently to enhance their learning but chances for them to use their writing skills in different subjects are less well planned.

Good teaching ensures that pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve well. Most children exceed the goals in all areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. However, about half of the children do not learn how to form letters correctly and problems persist into later years. Good teaching on most fronts continues and standards are above average by the age of seven. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 3, except in handwriting and spelling. This is because teaching is not clear-cut about how to develop these skills consistently. Additionally, there are times when teaching for some pupils in Years 1 and 3 does not always make full use of assessments to adapt work for their different abilities in mathematics. In Years 4 and 5, high quality teaching pitches the work at exactly the right challenging level for all abilities and so pupils make very rapid progress. As a result, standards are very high by the time pupils leave the school.

The school provides good value for money. Good leadership and management mean that the school has an accurate view of its effectiveness. The school knows where it is going and how to get there. Its capacity to improve is good because it examines its performance carefully and takes action to make things better. This has led to very good improvements to the way in which pupils investigate in science and use information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection. The dip in mathematics and writing standards last year for pupils in Year 2 has been resolved through tackling underlying problems in teaching and learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in handwriting and spelling and provide more opportunities for writing across the curriculum.
- Make better use of assessments in mathematics in Years 1 and 3 to pitch work at the right level.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' progress is good in nearly all aspects and they achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because of good teaching. The progress of four- and five-year-olds is good and is particularly rapid in speaking and listening. Children do not communicate as well in writing because too many struggle to form letters correctly. Even though progress from Years 1 to 3 is good overall, the problems with handwriting persist and even more-able pupils sometimes do not spell common words correctly. Occasionally, progress in mathematics is slower in Years 1 and 3 because the work is either too hard or too easy for pupils. Evidence from teachers' assessments, talking to pupils and looking at their work in books shows that pupils make faster progress in Years 4 and 5. By the time they leave the school, pupils' work in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT reaches a high standard and pupils are on track to reach exceptionally high standards by the time they are eleven.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are very well prepared for the future because of their exceptional skills in literacy and numeracy, as well as their enjoyment in learning and their capacity to work together. Pupils' strong sense of right and wrong is reflected in their excellent behaviour. They see the sense of the rules, such as not playing on the steps, fences or walls, and they keep to them. Pupils relish responsibilities and work enthusiastically to improve their school and its community.

One Year 5 pupil commented that 'I love school because you can get involved in things and no-one gets left out.' Members of the ECO club (an environmental action group) work very effectively to improve the school and village environment. Pupils help each other to understand how to keep healthy and safe. Year 5 pupils, for example, are trained as road safety officers and run a club so that others can learn through talks and quizzes. Pupils eat healthily and take full advantage of the opportunities to keep fit through sporting activities

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Relationships are very good in all classes. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities learn at a good rate because of good teaching. Teachers make the work fun for all pupils and welcome their ideas so that pupils want to learn. In an activity in the Reception class, for example, children clearly explained how they were adapting their designs when making models of luggage for the role-play area based on an airport theme. The very effective use of assessments in Years 4 and

5, linked to consistently high expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve, speeds up pupils' learning. In Years 1 and 3, work is not always adapted sufficiently to meet pupils' needs in mathematics and pupils do not learn consistent strategies for spelling. The teaching of handwriting is not as well planned as it should be throughout the school and so there is much ground to make up in the later years.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It gives pupils a lively enthusiasm for learning and excitement in their work. Pupils are particularly keen to explore the possibilities offered by using computers to enrich their learning in different subjects. Good planning for mathematical and scientific investigations allows pupils to explore their ideas and test out different approaches. There are insufficient planned opportunities at times for writing in different subjects, such as history or geography. The take-up of extra-curricular activities is high, particularly in sport. The pupils' work in personal, social and health education very effectively ensures that pupils know how to keep safe, fit and healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school's welcoming atmosphere and good level of concern for individuals by the staff mean that pupils feel safe and valued. The school is currently working to improve its systems for passing on information from one teacher to another. At present, systems are too cumbersome to allow for easy retrieval of information. This is a limiting factor in establishing quickly what pupils need to work on next when they move classes or are taught by different teachers, particularly in mathematics in Years 1 and 3. Target setting in writing has been well established over this year and pupils know what their targets are.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and staff give equal support to the school's strong Christian ethos and making sure that pupils do well in their work. The headteacher leads a happy staff team that is eager to do the best for pupils. There is good capacity to improve, reflected in good improvement since the last inspection. Monitoring of teaching and analysis of data are used well to identify the right priorities for improvement. Current initiatives to improve aspects of writing are being carried through well and the school is providing better guidance to teachers on how to resolve difficulties in handwriting and spelling. The effectiveness with which this guidance is being followed has yet to be reviewed. Governors visit the school to check on how well it is doing and they seek the views of parents. As a result of gathering parents' views, for example, extra meetings for parents were arranged to give information about the curriculum for the youngest children.

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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	1	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	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	1	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 helping us with our work when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you. You are right to be proud of your school and your parents are pleased that you go there. You play a big part in making it such a happy and exciting place. Everyone works hard to give you a good start to your education. These are the things that we found are best about your school.

You are growing up as confident, very well-behaved young people who enjoy learning and know how to keep safe and healthy.

You do well in your work and standards are very high by the time you leave the school.

The grown-ups listen to your ideas and so you can help to make your community a better place for everyone.

Your teachers take good care of you and give you extra help if you need it.

Those of you in Years 4 and 5 do very well because teaching gives you exactly what you need to do your very best.

The people in charge of the school know what they need to do to make the school even better for you.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that:

You know how to improve your handwriting and spelling and you have more chances to write in lessons.

The work in mathematics is always just at the right level for those of you in Years 1 and 3.

You are a credit to your school. Keep working hard and making the most of your time at St Luke's. We wish you every success in the future.