



# The Lancaster School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120686  
**LEA** LINCOLNSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280869  
**Inspection dates** 16 May 2006 to 17 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Dr. Trevor Watts LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Jasmin Road
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		LN6 0QQ
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01522685078
<b>Number on roll</b>	191	<b>Fax number</b>	01522690374
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Steve Darby
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss. Jane Metcalfe

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 16 May 2006 - 17 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280869
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average-sized infant school that includes Nursery and Reception-aged children. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The catchment area is one of relatively high social and economic deprivation. More than one in four pupils has learning difficulties or disabilities, which is considerably higher than the national 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 school in which pupils develop their personal and social skills well. The school's own view is also that it is satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with a very low level of skills. The Nursery unit has been refurbished and re-organised recently, and the provision in the Foundation Stage is now satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, but remain behind nationally expected standards when they leave Reception. Throughout the school, pupils' progress, considering their starting points, is satisfactory. However, their results in national tests, compared with national averages are still lagging behind the expected level at each stage of their education in reading, writing and mathematics, including at the end of Year 2. The school has made sound efforts to raise standards, but these actions have not yet had the desired effect. The large proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has a considerable effect on overall standards. The school's good curriculum is enriched by many additional activities. Teaching is satisfactory, with many strong points, but sometimes lesson activities are not best suited to good learning. Pupils' progress is assessed well. Teachers are beginning to use assessment information to plan activities that are more suitable for pupils of different abilities. Pupils are safe and well looked after, with good school-wide care procedures to guide teachers. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with good leadership by the headteacher. Self-assessment is increasingly rigorous and accurate. For instance, following a recent series of lesson observations that brought some shortcomings to light, the school has revised its judgement on the quality of teaching from good to satisfactory. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. There is a satisfactory capacity to continue the improvement of the past two years, since the headteacher was appointed. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve standards in English and mathematics by continuing to implement plans already in place. - Improve the quality of teaching by implementing the action points which have arisen during classroom observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, and data analysis.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are below national averages, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. When entering the Nursery, children's knowledge and skills are well below those expected for their age, particularly in social and communication areas. Children make satisfactory progress, especially in their personal and social development, but many enter Reception still working on very early steps in their learning. Their steady progress continues in Reception, and at the end of the Reception year, children's standards remain behind those expected at this age. In Years 1 and 2, the steady rate of progress continues, with pupils achieving satisfactorily. This leads to pupils' standards of attainment still

being below national averages at the age of seven. Less than half the pupils reached the middle and higher levels in writing in the 2005 national tests. Results for reading and mathematics were better, but too many pupils, especially boys, attained at the lower end of a satisfactory level (2c). This is partly because many pupils had additional learning needs, and also because insufficient challenge was previously provided for higher ability pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them. In art and physical education pupils achieve well. Pupils' targets for the impending national tests are insufficiently challenging, considering children's attainment on entry. Predictions indicate that pupils will only attain at similar levels to the 2005 results. The school has clearly identified areas for improvement, including setting new, more challenging targets next year.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils feel safe, are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school: 'This is a nice school. I love coming here,' said one pupil. Their behaviour is mostly good in lessons and around school. Their social and moral development is good. Pupils are confident with each other, and with adults. Through lessons, assemblies and the example set by staff, pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. From the Nursery onwards, children begin to reflect on their own and others' actions. Pupils develop a sound, but limited, understanding of cultures other than their own, such as those of China and India. Pupils have a good awareness of health issues, including the need for a balanced diet, regular exercise, and ways of keeping safe. Through the School Council, pupils sensibly discuss matters such as playground improvements. They proudly contribute to their community through selected charity events and singing and drama performances. Good links exist with the community and outside services such as the local newspaper. Pupils satisfactorily develop skills for their future well-being, such as working cooperatively and independently. Attendance is a little below the national average. Good efforts are made by both the school and other educational and social organisations to reduce absences, especially those for family holidays.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, rather than good as the school judged them, because clear strengths are balanced by weaker aspects. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, teachers are good at planning a long-term sequence of lessons, based on their assessment of pupils' progress. Teacher-led explanations and demonstrations usually start lessons well, with objectives that staff explain clearly, although some pupils do not listen well. Teachers use electronic whiteboards confidently. This adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of lessons and their computing skills. Teachers' positive relationships and good use of questioning often build up pupils' attention and

enthusiasm well. Teachers round off their lessons with a good review of what has been learned. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well by teachers and capable classroom support staff. Staff mark pupils' work regularly and positively, making clear suggestions to help pupils to improve their work in future. Teachers satisfactorily alter their planning according to their assessment of how well pupils are making progress. Their assessments are accurate and they focus mainly on skills in English, mathematics and personal development. However, in some lessons, following the teachers' introduction, pupils' individual and group work is often too easy, comfortable and not very relevant. If not working with a member of staff, for instance, pupils may be allowed to coast along at their own pace, or do very little work at all.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. All the required subjects are covered well, and pupils' learning is enriched by a good range of additional activities. Literacy, numeracy and personal skills form the core of the school's work. The curriculum effectively meets the needs of the many pupils who have learning difficulties or who have few personal skills. In Nursery and Reception, children follow a good curriculum based on the recommended areas of learning. This merges seamlessly into the National Curriculum before pupils enter Year 1. One afternoon each week is given over to a good selection of wider activities, currently including French, cookery and photography. Pupils have a choice of seven activities, and have to stick with their choice for half a term (six weeks). They speak very enthusiastically about the sessions. Pupils frequently have learning trips to places such as farms, a science centre, the coast at Mablethorpe, and a nearby nature reserve. Visitors who enhance pupils' learning include a professional footballer, the 'Urban Ranger' to talk about the environment, and a group that teaches circus skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. They are given a high priority in terms of staff awareness and time because of the particularly low level of personal and social skills that children have when they first come to the school. From the Nursery to Year 2, pupils work in a caring, safe and supportive environment which encourages them to seek help should they need it. Bullying is rare, but when it occurs it is dealt with firmly. Staff are alert to the needs of pupils at risk, and provide effective support through a structured programme that includes external support when needed. Child protection arrangements are clear, well known to all staff and are coordinated well by the headteacher. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified early, and classroom work mainly matches their learning needs well. Pupils' progress is tracked and the school has substantial assessment information on all pupils. Teachers are increasingly using this information to guide them in their planning of lessons, activities and approaches to learning. School leaders have begun to use the information more purposefully to identify areas that need to be developed.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior staff have identified the areas that need to be improved, and have set in motion a range of measures to bring about the improvements. The school judged leadership and management to be good because of the measures they introduced, but it is too soon to see if these have been the right measures, or are effective enough in raising standards. The headteacher faced many challenges when she was appointed just over two years ago, when the school had moved from grant-maintained to foundation status. As a result of her guidance and drive, many local agencies are now well involved in supporting pupils. Governors have also become more involved and questioning, and they now operate satisfactorily. Although there is not a deputy headteacher, a senior management team has been formed, and its role is developing soundly. Members satisfactorily fulfil their responsibilities in different subjects and areas of the school, although their observations of lessons are not rigorous enough to help teaching to improve rapidly. The headteacher has made significant changes, including increased opportunities for training for all staff and more relevant performance management targets. Several teachers have changed classes or left the school, and new teachers have arrived. Learning is beginning to improve through, for instance, better long-term planning, especially for boys, much improved behaviour management, more positive marking methods, booster groups, extended work for particularly talented pupils and better targeted individual learning targets. All pupils have equal access to learning, and make progress that is appropriate to their abilities. Parents are mostly very pleased with the school. Their opinions about their children's education are sought regularly. Changes to the Nursery provision, and the curriculum (particularly the 'activities afternoons') have been influenced by the results of parents' questionnaires. Parents are active on the governing body. Outside agencies make a positive contribution to the evaluation of how well the school is performing, especially in social and health-related matters. School leaders demonstrate a satisfactory, and growing, capacity to improve. Satisfactory value for money is given.

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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?	2	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	4	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	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	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>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	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**

I'm sure that many of you will remember two of us coming to visit you recently. Thank you for being so polite and helpful in answering our questions. What we liked most about your school We found that you behave well, and get on well with your classmates, teachers and their helpers. If you need extra help in class you are well supported. You told us that there was very little bullying and that teachers are good at listening to you and dealing with anything that does happen. We liked your School Council, and the things you told us about it. Most of you like your lessons because they are interesting and you can often use the electronic whiteboards. This helps you to learn. We especially like the idea of your 'enrichment afternoon' when you learn about some really exciting things like cooking, taking photographs and speaking French. Your headteacher and other adults work hard to improve many things around the school. Almost all of your parents and carers tell us that they think the school is wonderful, and is helping you in lots of ways. What we are asking for now We are asking your teachers to give some of you harder work to do, and make sure it is the right kind of work, especially in writing and mathematics. We hope this will help you to think more, and learn faster. You can help by always paying attention when your teacher or your classroom assistant is talking, and trying hard when you are working in your groups or on your own. Thank you again for the way you helped us both.