



Launton Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123103
LEA Oxfordshire LEA
Inspection number 281402
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006
Reporting inspector Nicola Davies AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bicester Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Launton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Bicester OX26 5DP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01869 253692
Number on roll	114	Fax number	01869 241738
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Sue Wakelin
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Moorehouse

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school in the village of Launton. Like most small schools, the number varies in each year group. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and those eligible for free schools meals are both well below the national average.

The current headteacher was appointed in April 2005 after a period of uncertainty due to the long term absence of the previous headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school, parents and the inspector agree that this is a rapidly improving school. As one parent commented, 'We are all very proud to be a part of the developing community of Launton School'. The school judges its effectiveness to be good, but the inspector finds it to be satisfactory because many of the recent improvements have yet to be reflected in sustained good progress and high standards. Currently, pupils make satisfactory progress and reach average standards. Recent improvements have resulted in a good curriculum and effective care, guidance and support. As a result, pupils grow in confidence and maturity during their time at the school. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and most children reach the goals set for the end of the Reception year.

The new headteacher has galvanised the school community and is tackling weaknesses identified through robust self evaluation, with determination. Precise planning and thoughtful use of the expertise within the school has resulted in marked improvements. For example, not all pupils were doing as well as they should in English and mathematics. As a result, more challenging targets were set. The school's comprehensive tracking shows that pupils are on course to meet them. This illustrates well the good leadership and management of the school and the strong capacity to continue to improve.

The teaching is satisfactory and improving. There are many good features in lessons. Although the use of assessment has improved, some of the activities the teachers plan are not always well enough matched to what pupils need to learn next. Similarly, information about children's progress in the Foundation Stage is not used to precisely enough to plan the next stage in their learning. The teachers are making good use of the recently installed interactive whiteboards in their drive towards higher standards. However, plans to extend and enhance learning using information and communication technology (ICT) are often undermined by the unreliable computer equipment.

The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure that activities planned for groups of pupils consistently match what they need to learn next
- improve the provision for ICT
- improve the way information about children's progress is shared between the Foundation Stage and the school

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children join the Foundation Stage with a variety of strengths and experiences but generally have the skills and knowledge expected for their age. They make sound progress which means that most meet the expected learning goals by the end of their

time in the Reception class. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress through the school and the results they achieve in national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average.

The headteacher has improved the way the school tracks pupils' progress. This has highlighted where pupils can achieve more, particularly in English and mathematics. Careful monitoring of teaching and learning in these subjects means that pupils look on course to meet their more challenging targets. Effective training for teaching assistants ensures that they work well with teachers to meet the individual needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result, these pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points. There are no significant differences between how well girls and boys or the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school, work hard and behave very well. This is one of the reasons why their attendance is good. Children make good progress in their personal and social development in the Foundation Stage and develop very good relationships with their teachers and other pupils as they go through the school. This means they work and play together very well and show an enthusiasm for learning. Pupils not only follow the school rules but also play an important part in ensuring that these rules are fair.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result, they are friendly, confident and respect the feelings of others. They are helpful to each other and demonstrate a respect for difference and other pupils' needs, feelings and abilities. Pupils know how to stay safe and are determined to 'spread the word' about keeping healthy. Older pupils run a healthy tuck shop and pupils take part enthusiastically in the good opportunities they have for physical exercise during and after the school day.

Pupils enjoy their responsibilities around the school and take them seriously. For example, the younger members of the school council understand their job is to represent the views of the pupils in their year group and which may not necessarily be the same as their own. Their sound basic skills, enthusiasm for learning and very good behaviour prepare them well for the next phase of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory and improving because the headteacher has created a teaching team which is now sharing its skills and expertise for the benefit of the pupils. Teachers work well with teaching assistants who make a good contribution to the progress which pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make. Teachers clearly explain what they want pupils to learn and involve them in reviewing how well

they have done. Teaching involves the pupils effectively in lessons, ensuring they work hard and enjoy learning. The new interactive whiteboards are being used well to captivate the pupils' interest and enable teachers to use a variety of methods to stimulate pupils' thinking and improve their work.

The monitoring of teaching in English and mathematics has improved teaching and learning in these subjects. The priority given to these subjects means that teachers have not yet had opportunities to learn from the often good teaching which results from teachers' particular specialist knowledge or enthusiasm in other subjects. Improvements to the way that teachers track progress help them to plan a variety of activities for different groups of pupils. However, these activities do not yet always match what pupils' need to learn next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good as it meets the needs of all pupils and helps them enjoy and achieve during their time at the school. As one parent commented 'Our children are often excited by activities in class and after school'. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy learning through teaching and through interesting play experiences which the school has improved through the development of an outdoor classroom. A thorough review of the curriculum, instigated by the headteacher, has improved the links made between subjects and provided more creative opportunities which are enjoyed by pupils and admired by visitors and parents. For example, as part of their work in Art, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 are working together to design and build a Gaudi-inspired mosaic sculpture of 'Larry the Leaping Launton Lizard'.

Although the school plans very well for pupils to develop and apply their ICT skills in all subjects, the unreliable computer equipment means that pupils do not always benefit from these opportunities to enhance their learning. The school has good links with the local community which means that pupils learn from a wide range of local trips and visitors as well as visits further afield. For example, the youngest children celebrated a 'wedding' in the local church and held a healthy wedding banquet afterwards. The school has recently increased the range of extra activities it offers which successfully encourage pupils' sporting, musical and cultural interests and these are enjoyed by pupils and appreciated by parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support that this school provides are good and contributes to pupils' good personal development. Procedures for protecting children and assessing and dealing with risks are robust. Teachers know pupils well and work in partnership with parents and specialist agencies to identify any problems they face and make sure they get the support they need. This means that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are more vulnerable are well supported within school and are involved well in assessing their own progress. As a result, they achieve the targets in their individual education plans.

Improvements to the way that pupils' progress is tracked means that teachers now set appropriate targets which they share with pupils to help guide their learning. The school has identified a need to ensure that the careful tracking of children's learning and progress in the Foundation Stage is used more effectively to identify and meet their needs in the reception class and the early years of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Following her appointment, the new headteacher, staff and governors successfully worked together to identify what needed to be improved. They agreed a clear plan and a realistic timetable to manage the many changes that were needed. The new headteacher is leading the drive for improvement skilfully and with determination. Parents have recognised and wholeheartedly welcomed the sense of common purpose this has engendered. Staff and the effective and knowledgeable governors now have a shared understanding of what they want to achieve, how much it will cost and how they can measure their progress. For example, they quickly identified that not all pupils were doing as well as they could in English and mathematics. They improved teachers' understanding of how best to teach these subjects and set more challenging targets. As a result, the standard of younger pupils' reading and writing has improved and older pupils are making better progress.

The school has addressed successfully many of the issues from the previous inspection. For example, the range and frequency of clubs has improved and a review of the curriculum has created additional opportunities for pupils to make good progress in creative subjects such as music and art. The school knows its own strengths and weaknesses well and is using strengths from within the 'Launton team' well to improve the quality of education it provides. For example, teachers and other adults with particular strengths in subjects or areas of responsibility are effective in improving provision although their role in monitoring the quality of teaching is underdeveloped.

The short time scale in which improvements have been made means that not all their actions have yet been fully reflected in improved progress and provision for pupils. However, the evident successes of their approach demonstrate good leadership and management and confirm the school's capacity to continue to improve.

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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?	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	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ 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	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	1	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	1	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?	3	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	3	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

Pupils

I very much enjoyed meeting and talking to so many of you when I visited your school recently. This letter is to thank you for explaining so clearly all about your school. Knowing how seriously you take your responsibilities to help the school, I am pleased to share with you what you, your teachers and your parents helped me find out.

Since the governors (with help from the school council) appointed the new headteacher, all the adults in the school have been able to make plans for the future. I agree with the school that these are good plans but not all of them have been achieved yet. So there are good things about the school, and some things that could be better.

I was very impressed by how polite, friendly and confident you were, not just when you were talking to me, but also when you were working in lessons or playing in the playground. I was pleased to see how well you help each other and how keen you are to make sure that everyone keeps fit and healthy. Like your parents, I think that your teachers care about each one of you and how well you do. This is one reason why they keep a careful track of the progress you are making and give you extra help or harder work. Just as you said, I saw how they use the interactive whiteboards, visits and interesting projects to make your lessons enjoyable and to help you learn. The teachers explained to me how sometimes the school computers don't work as well as they should so I have asked them to make sure they do, so that you can have more opportunities to work on them in all your lessons. Your headteacher, the staff and all the adults involved in the school are working well together to make sure that the school gets better and better.

With best wishes

Nicola Davies

Lead Inspector