



Lympsham Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123810
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281566
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 23 May 2006
Reporting inspector Malcolm Greenhalgh AI

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

Type of school	First	School address	Rectory Way
School category	Voluntary controlled		Lympsham
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		Weston-super-Mare BS24 0EW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01934 750473
Number on roll	83	Fax number	01934 750954
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	13 September 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Julie Larter

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 23 May 2006 - 23 May 2006	Inspection number 281566
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most schools. Pupils come to the school from a wide geographical area and are from a broadly average socio-economic background; the large majority are White British. Nearly all pupils speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below the national average. The school's Foundation Stage consists of Reception children in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class.

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. It has improved rapidly since the arrival of the new headteacher two years ago and a good platform has been built for further improvement. The school has formed the same judgement. Since the last inspection in 1999, standards had been in steady decline until 2005, when this problem was tackled. Since this time pupils have made satisfactory progress in each year group, including the Foundation Stage, although standards in Year 4 remain below the national average and boys have not achieved as well as they should. The progress pupils are making in reading is better than that in writing and mathematics.

Pupils enjoy school and have responded well to the school's initiatives on healthy lifestyles and personal and social development. Attendance rates are above the national average. Whilst pupils' behaviour is satisfactory, inconsistencies in the ways staff manage this lead to some pupils pushing the boundaries of what is acceptable. The pupils' personal development is good, which is directly related to the good care and support provided by the school.

The quality of the teaching and learning in each of the three classes is satisfactory and relationships are good. Teachers plan to meet the wide range of needs in their classes but pupils need more detailed information on what individuals need to do to improve upon next academically and personally. The school has improved the curriculum in recent years so that it fully meets the statutory requirements. This was an issue at the last inspection. It provides a good balance between ensuring the basics are soundly taught and providing enough richness to meet the diverse interests of the pupils from the time they start the school in Reception to when they leave in Year 4. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including a residential visit for the older pupils.

The headteacher has provided good vision and direction for the school and has ensured that the climate for improvement is right for both staff and pupils. These factors have had a positive influence on all aspects of the school, enabling it to make satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The school understands that more rigour needs to be applied to identifying and securing a clearer view of how well all pupils are doing. The school is providing satisfactory value for money and is well placed to make the next series of changes to move the school from satisfactory to good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the detail provided for pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics, to ensure they have a clear understanding of what they need to improve next.
- Ensure that teachers make accurate and secure judgements when tracking the progress all pupils make as they move through the school.
- Ensure that staff use consistent approaches to the management of pupils' behaviour.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

From the time of the last inspection in 1999, standards declined steadily. This situation has improved in the last two years to a point where pupils are making satisfactory progress towards appropriately challenging targets from Reception through to Year 4 in writing and mathematics, and good progress in reading. Standards at the end of Reception and Year 2 vary depending on the ability of each group. In 2005, standards were above the national averages for Year 2 pupils and, although current standards are in line with expectations rather than above, this does reflect where pupils were when they entered school.

The standards in the present Year 4 are, however, below the national expectations for the boys, who have not achieved as well as they should. The girls in this year group are performing better. All these pupils have made sound progress since they were in Year 2, a point in time where they were underperforming significantly. The progress made by those pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory and for those for whom English is an additional language, progress is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development is good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has put much effort into this aspect of provision to help raise the pupils' awareness of the influence they have on their own development. As a result, the pupils respond well to the school's initiatives and have good attitudes towards school. The pupils are healthy and are keen to take part in physical activities in such things as the 'Wake and Shake' session in the playground and joining in at break times with the many games played on the nearby tennis courts. In these situations and others, the pupils demonstrate a good ability to ensure they are safe. They enjoy coming to school and attendance levels are above the national average. Incidences of bullying are very low and pupils get on well with each other during lessons and in the playgrounds. Pupils are also keen to help improve the school through class discussions and the school council. They are eager to contribute to the local and wider communities and happily raise funds for charities. The pupils' behaviour is satisfactory but sometimes the noise levels in the classrooms are distracting for others and members of staff are not always consistent in their approach to ensuring that the management of this kind of behaviour is consistent. The pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are satisfactory and help to prepare pupils for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in each of the three classes. Members of staff have developed good relationships with the pupils, who are soundly engaged in their activities. Lessons are satisfactorily planned to meet the range of ages and abilities in each class and the activities are effectively organised. As a result, pupils are clear about what they have to do in lessons but are less sure about what the next steps in their academic and personal learning are. For example, when asked how they could improve the quality of the use of adjectives in their writing, they were not clear how they would go about it beyond using more adjectives.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and it is better than at the time of the last inspection when there were concerns expressed about the range of subjects and activities. The school has worked hard to ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that the activities provided for pupils are more relevant to their needs. The programme for personal, social and health education is a strong aspect of the curriculum, as demonstrated by the special programme followed on the afternoon of the inspection to raise the pupils' awareness of the misuse of drugs. Much emphasis is given to extra-curricular activities and many pupils are involved in a range of physical activities available during break and lunch times. The school also organises an annual residential trip to develop the pupils' social skills and to help them become more independent.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school has placed much emphasis on caring for and supporting the pupils. The school is very conscientious about safety issues around the school and carries out appropriate risk assessments as well ensuring all child protection procedures are fully complied with. The school takes special care of new pupils and, as a result, they integrate very quickly. This was well illustrated by one parent who said, 'Although my child has only been here since September she has been made to feel very welcome and has made lots of new friends very easily. She is happy to be in school and is currently joining in with after-school tennis, country dancing and playing recorders. This is quite an achievement for a child who didn't want to do anything of this type in her previous school.' The school is very keen to involve parents, who, in return, are very supportive of what the school is doing for their children. There are sound assessment procedures in place for those pupils who need additional support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has provided the school with a clear focus and vision and has been keen and successful in instilling a sense of team spirit amongst staff and governors. She has also been keen to promote the personal development of the pupils, particularly with respect to their behaviour and independence. As one parent said, 'Every aspect of learning, whether it's in the classroom or playground, has been tackled and brought up to new heights.' This focus has ensured that a good base has been built for further improvement to take place. The school is also aware that, at present, the systems for evaluating the school's performance and assessing the pupils' progress are not robust or rigorous enough.

Governors and parents are very supportive of the school but, at the moment, they are not an integral part of the school's drive for improvement through documents such as the school development plan and school self-evaluation form. The budget is effectively planned and good use has been made of financial resources to ensure staffing levels have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The overall judgement for leadership and management is different to that given by the school but the school agrees that the satisfactory judgement, with good capacity to improve, is accurate in terms of where the school is at present.

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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	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

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	3	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	3	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

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?	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

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 very much for making us feel so welcome at your school. We enjoyed talking to you about the things you are doing in school and now want to share our inspection findings with you.

What we liked best

The good progress you are making with your reading.

The headteacher has ensured the school is in a good position to improve further.

You enjoy your time in school and have good relationships with each other.

The staff provide you with good support and care.

There is a wide range of activities for you to do during and after school.

What the school can do next

Improve how well teachers share with you what you need to learn next.

Be clearer about how they know whether you are doing well enough in school.

Make sure that you all improve your behaviour and that some of you are less noisy in class so that other children are not distracted.

We wish you every success for the future.