



Larkhill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126202
LEA Wiltshire
Inspection number 282075
Inspection dates 22 September 2005 to 23 September 2005
Reporting inspector Faysal Mikdadi RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wilson Road
School category	Community		Larkhill
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 8QB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01980 652318
Number on roll	269	Fax number	01980 652318
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Steve Norton

Age group 5 to 11	Inspection dates 22 September 2005 - 23 September 2005	Inspection number 282075
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Larkhill is an average sized primary school for pupils aged from 5 to 11. Pupils come from military families living on the army base. These families have to move frequently and pupils join and leave at different times in the year. Very few pupils who complete their Year 6 would have joined the school at the beginning of their education. The pupils are largely from white British backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups. A significant proportion of pupils have special educational needs. When children first join the school, into the reception year, and at other times, their attainment is low. The school has a high staff turnover.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspection evidence confirms the school's view that it provides a satisfactory quality of education. Pupils are happy. Those joining for short periods are well settled. Parents are happy with the school. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, and most pupils behave well. Pupils make a positive contribution to their community. However, attendance is below the national average.

Children in the Reception class are well cared for. This factor contributes greatly to their satisfactory progress, despite the fact that they have to change schools frequently. Those who join the school in this class, and at different times of the year, need support in most areas. The school is working hard to overcome these challenges and, as a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. Its efforts have brought about some recent success in national test results, particularly in reading, where pupils make good progress, and in mathematics. Nevertheless, standards are currently below average in Year 6.

Leadership is satisfactory. The high turnover of staff is managed well, and the headteacher has improved senior management. Subject leaders and senior staff have identified priorities for improvement. They monitor teaching, but do not always use what they learn to help make teaching better. These, and other improvements to the curriculum and planning, have begun to have an impact on improving pupils' achievement. It is well placed to make further improvements. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and improving. It has been successful in enhancing pupils' reading. Teachers mark work well but they do not always tell pupils precisely what they need to do to improve their work further. Grade: 3

What the school should do to improve further

- use the information gained from assessing pupils' work to help the pupils understand exactly what they need to do next to make their work better
- make greater use of the information gained from the school's monitoring of teaching, learning and progress in order to help plan what the school needs to do next to raise standards and accelerate progress
- increase attendance levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

On entry to the Reception class, children have low attainment, with particular weaknesses in reading, writing and mathematics. These children make satisfactory progress from this low base, and standards are below average when they enter Year 1. Pupils arriving at other times during their school life also have low attainment, and this factor continues to influence standards throughout the school.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, but standards remain below average in Year 6 and Year 2. The school has used the results of national tests to set targets and point to where improvements need to be made. For example, the mathematics results dropped in 2004. As a result, the school focused on boosting the teaching of mathematics and, by 2005, results improved, with more pupils reaching the expected Level 4. The continuing focus on improving literacy skills has also had an impact, particularly in reading, where pupils' progress is good. There has been steady improvement in the Year 2 tests for reading over the last five years. This success has been achieved because the teachers created many opportunities for reading aloud to adults, and to large audiences, as was seen during an assembly when pupils read their poems and travel stories. There have been more modest improvements in writing in the Year 2 tests. Following a drop in the 2005 Year 6 science results, the need to develop pupils' independent skills through greater use of investigative activities has been adopted as a priority.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good. Pupils' spiritual development is good with many benefiting from the school's valuable links with local churches. Pupils develop a sensitive understanding of moral values. For example, they show concern for one another's well-being when they respond to those without friends who stand at the 'bus stop' in the playground. Social development is also good. Pupils work well together and relationships are positive. Most pupils are keen to learn. Behaviour is good but a few, mainly boys, can occasionally be inattentive and talkative. Pupils enjoy their education, saying that they like their school life and that they feel safe. Cultural development is good. Opportunities include music lessons, discussions about poetry and the rich range of extra-curricular activities and visits all of which help to nurture pupils' cultural awareness.

The school succeeds in enhancing the pupils' self-esteem. They are given opportunities to display their achievement in writing poetry, dancing, acting, reading, talking and painting. They are also encouraged to work together and to be considerate. The result is that most pupils feel good about themselves and about their school.

Pupils develop healthy lifestyles. Physical education lessons and the link with Sport England make a strong contribution to developing pupils' understanding of how to live a healthy life. The personal, social and health education programme ensures a reasonable understanding of issues related to staying healthy and safe. The food is wholesome but some pupils bring packed lunches that are less varied and do not contain healthier portions such as fruit and vegetables, which the school is encouraging them to eat.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the community. Year 6 pupils are keen to be prefects. Pupils value the school council and feel that they are listened to. Representatives are informed of a wide range of concerns and have brought about

positive changes in areas like the supply of stimulating play equipment for use at break times.

Pupils come punctually to school. Attendance is below the national average because many families take their holidays during term time. The school has worked hard to convince parents of the importance of regular attendance to help raise pupils' standards and achievement.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, including the teaching of children in the Reception class. The teaching of reading is good, and the quality of teaching is improving in other subjects, such as mathematics. Adults manage pupils' behaviour skilfully, including those boys who are sometimes challenging. Learning tasks engage pupils' interest and match their needs. In this way, pupils have developed good learning habits. Pupils concentrate well and co-operate effectively.

Teachers plan well and build on pupils' previous learning. Pupils' progress is checked during lessons through thorough questioning and the good grouping of pupils during activities. Learning difficulties are dealt with effectively in reading and, more recently, mathematics. Pupils respond well to the teachers' marking. However, the information gained from all these checks is not always used to set clear and specific targets for improvement. It is better in mathematics, where pupils are checked formally every six weeks and know their targets. Careful monitoring of lessons gives the school good information on the quality of teaching, although this information is inconsistently used to improve provision further.

Homework is consistent and contributes to the pupils' good achievement in reading and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the teaching assistants.

Grade: 3

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The broad curriculum covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving curriculum provision to ensure pupils have a wide range of experiences and that the needs of all learners are met. For example, it has introduced the teaching of French, created a stronger focus on encouraging literacy and numeracy skills and introduced many enrichment activities.

During the last 18 months, planning has improved considerably. Plans are specifically designed to meet the pupils' needs. Subject leaders and the headteacher monitor the plans, and this practice gives the senior management team an overview of planning and what might be improved. All health and safety requirements are met.

The school offers pupils a good variety of enrichment activities that add to their learning. These include a broad range of visits to sites of historical and cultural interest and a wide variety of after-school and lunchtime clubs.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The overall level of care is good, particularly that for pupils' personal development. Pupils described teachers and other staff as approachable and keen to help. The needs of pupils moving in and out of the school are handled well. Pupils who joined the school during term time said that they found it easy to settle in because everybody offered sympathetic help. The school has good procedures for an efficient transfer both in and out of the school. It is particularly successful in enhancing each pupil's self-esteem, as well as diminishing any anxiety that moving so often may cause.

Staff and pupils report that there is little bullying as a result of an effective behaviour policy implementation. There are up-to-date and well implemented policies and procedures relating to child protection and drug abuse. The school provides good support for those with learning difficulties because teaching assistants are well trained and deployed.

Standards are assessed regularly, and the standards of new pupils are quickly established. However, the information gained from these assessments is inconsistently used to improve progress. Pupils have some general targets in literacy and numeracy. Reports to parents are clear and thorough.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. Committed and hard working senior managers and supportive governors now share his aspirations, and there is evidence of sound and improving leadership in most subjects. Staff feel valued. The headteacher has succeeded in raising expectations, so that the school is now making a difference to the development of every pupil. The main areas that have improved have been reading and mathematics. These improvements have been made in the face of the mobility of pupils and the high turnover of staff. The school has moved forward, particularly in the last year, and is well placed to improve still further. However, as many developments are recent, the impact on standards and achievement is not yet apparent in every aspect of the school's work.

Senior managers now have a better idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they monitor teaching and look at assessment to track progress. The system for target setting has resulted in higher levels of achievement in reading and mathematics. Nevertheless, they do not yet evaluate the impact of these good systems to improve attainment and achievement, or to share findings in order to make further improvements. Governors are now also monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. They fulfil their statutory duties and responsibilities.

Staff turnover is high but selection and appointment procedures are sound. Resources are managed well. Links with other providers and the community are particularly good. As a result, there are many opportunities for the pupils to join the judo club and to play several other sports.

Grade: 3

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	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

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	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	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	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	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

25 September 2005

Dear Pupils

I am writing to tell you about our visit to your school. I want to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We enjoyed our visit. It was really nice meeting you. I enjoyed playing basketball with so many of you. Thank you so much for inviting me to play.

Your teachers do a good job in helping you settle down. You told us that you felt happy and safe at school. Because of your teacher's good work, your reading has improved a lot. Many of you also have got better at mathematics and writing, although some of you did not do as well in science. The school has now started helping you so that your science work will improve.

Teachers and helpers are good at doing interesting things with you, and help you to improve your work. You also get chances to study French. We have suggested to your teachers that they need to give you more advice on how to do even better.

You told us that you had lots of chances to do sports and play games. Many adults help with these activities. You also get good and healthy school lunches. Those of you who bring packed lunches might like to bring in more fruit and vegetables to eat.

Everyone in the school works hard to help you do well and to give you the chance to share your achievements with others. We really enjoyed the Friday assembly when so many of you talked about your holidays, read poetry, danced and sang. It was a really wonderful occasion.

The headteacher, governors and others work hard to make sure that you are taught well. We have suggested that it would help you if all the information collected on what happens in the school is used to make things even better.

You are good at coming to school on time, but your school has more pupils who are absent than many other schools. You should all try to attend school every day as this will ensure that you do not miss any lessons and that you will make better progress.

Once again, thank you so much for making our visit so enjoyable. We all wish you the very best in your studies.

Dr. F. H. Mikdadi - Lead inspector