



Lons Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112710
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289381
Inspection dates 6–7 November 2006
Reporting inspector Alison Cogher

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Tavistock Avenue
School category	Community		Ripley
Age range of pupils	4–7		Derbyshire DE5 3SE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01773 744319
Number on roll (school)	81	Fax number	01773 744319
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr David Crowther
		Headteacher	Mrs Linda Williams
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school on the outskirts of Ripley in Derbyshire. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average and no pupil has a statement of special educational need. All pupils come from a White British background and speak English as their first language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards. These include the Basic Skills Award and the Health Promoting School and Healthy Heart Awards. The school works very productively with local schools and outside agencies to support and extend pupils' learning.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that knows its strengths extremely well. Pupils make very good progress and achieve exceptionally well. Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection and the school is in a very strong position to improve further. The school provides very good value for money.

Expectations are high for all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher leads the school extremely well and all staff work very effectively as a team. They and governors share a clear vision for the future improvement of the school. Governors are very active in the school. They fulfil their role very well and hold the school to account for its work. Relationships within the school are very positive and there is a well-focused purposeful atmosphere where everyone feels valued and is able to contribute to school improvement. Procedures to check the quality of the school's work are very thorough and improvements are quickly and consistently implemented. Pupils and their parents hold the school in very high regard. Parental involvement in many aspects of the school's work is extensive and parents work very constructively with the school to support their children's learning at home.

Outstanding teaching enables pupils of all abilities including those with learning difficulties or disabilities to make very good progress in each year they are at the school. This results in pupils achieving standards overall that are very high by the end of Year 2. The school has maintained this very strong position for some years. Pupils are very happy at school and make extremely good progress in developing their personal and social skills. They are confident and very keen to take on responsibilities and to contribute to life within their school and the wider community. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy and are very clear about how to keep themselves safe.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and they reach above expected levels by the end of Reception. This high quality provision continues in Years 1 and 2. Teachers make exceptionally good use of assessment information to guide the planning of their lessons. They ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn through a very wide range of activities. These activities successfully challenge higher attaining pupils and also support pupils who find learning more difficult. Pupils' attitudes are very positive as a result and they are extremely well motivated. However, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to assess their own work in lessons so they know what they need to do to improve. The very good curriculum is well organised and the links made between subjects provide pupils with a context for their learning. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is good and supports pupils' learning in other subjects very well. Additional activities such as visits and the use of specialist teachers contribute very effectively to pupils' enjoyment of school and the standards they achieve.

Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and receive high quality support and guidance. Attendance is good. The school works very constructively with parents, other schools and outside agencies to secure the best possible provision for all its pupils. Pupils

develop very trusting relationships with adults and are very clear about what is expected of them. In this very caring and supportive environment pupils behave extremely well and thoroughly enjoy their time at school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide pupils with more opportunities to assess their own work in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding and standards in Year 2 are very high when compared to national averages. Children start in Reception with standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age although these vary from year to year. School-based assessment information clearly shows that pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make very good progress in their Reception year and through Years 1 and 2. This includes in literacy and numeracy skills. They achieve the challenging targets they are set and develop into confident individuals who are very eager to learn.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school places a very strong emphasis on supporting pupils' individual personal development and well-being, and these are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good because of the school's creative and practical approach to the curriculum and the clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and involvement in learning. Consequently pupils behave extremely well and have very positive attitudes to learning. Adults act as excellent role models with the result that relationships between pupils and adults, and pupils themselves, are extremely respectful and tolerant. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy, make sensible food choices at lunchtime and enjoy taking plenty of exercise. They talk very confidently and knowledgeably about the strategies they use to keep themselves and one another safe. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school and develop very good levels of independence. They contribute very well to their own community and enthusiastically take on responsibilities such as being a school councillor. Pupils who act as 'buddies' contribute significantly to the way younger pupils settle quickly and happily into the school. Pupils' contribution to the wider community is promoted very well through, for example, their links with a school in Romania. Their outstanding achievement in literacy and numeracy, and the extremely good personal skills they develop, prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage of their education and for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Outstanding, consistent teaching ensures that pupils achieve exceptionally well and develop into enthusiastic learners. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and an extremely good understanding of how to motivate and engage pupils. Skilled teaching assistants and volunteers make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning as they work in very close partnership with teachers. Very good use is made of assessment information to guide planning but pupils are given too few opportunities to assess their own work in lessons. Consequently they are not always clear about what they could do to make their work even better. Teachers are enthusiastic and inventive and lessons capture pupils' imagination and encourage them to explore, investigate and share their ideas. For example, by making their own jungles out of real leaves, twigs, bark and stones, pupils in Year 1 were able to think of many words to describe what it is like in a jungle. This type of high-quality activity that succeeds in harnessing pupils' natural enthusiasm and interest is the norm in every class. Consequently pupils develop the confidence to tackle challenging tasks that move their learning forwards rapidly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The range of activities for pupils is outstanding. The very good curriculum is enhanced by a wide variety of additional activities that support and extend pupils' learning very well. Pupils enjoy visits to places of interest and say it helps their learning. Many of these places, such as supermarkets and churches, are close to the school and provide additional support for pupils' developing sense of community. Specialist teaching is effective in broadening pupils' experiences. For example, all pupils enjoy learning French during school time and many pupils delight in playing tennis after school. The school works very constructively with other schools to improve the curriculum. For example, the school's increased use of the outdoors as a learning environment has resulted from working with another school as part of the Forest School Project.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's procedures are extremely good and consistently implemented. This ensures that pupils are exceptionally well cared for and nurtured as individuals. They receive high quality support and guidance because staff know them very well and work hard to meet their personal and learning needs. Pupils are very clear that they trust adults to help them learn well and solve difficulties in their personal lives. Systems for checking how well pupils are doing are very good. Information is meticulously collected and collated to provide a very accurate picture of the progress pupils are making. Teachers are quick to respond to this information to ensure that they are providing the best

possible opportunities for pupils to enjoy their time at school and to achieve as well as they can.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, all staff and governors work exceptionally well as a team. They are very sharply focused on ensuring that all pupils are provided with the opportunities they need to achieve their personal and academic potential. Expectations are high and systems to check the work of the school are very good and rigorously implemented. Parents' and pupils' views are valued and responded to. Staff are very flexible in their approach and are quick to respond to information they gather to improve the school's effectiveness. Agreed changes to whole-school procedures are implemented consistently. This consistency and commitment to improvement are real strengths and underpin the effectiveness of the quality of education provided by the school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 November 2006

Dear Children

Lons Infant School, Tavistock Avenue, Ripley, Derbyshire, DE5 3SE

Thank you very much for being so friendly and helpful and making me feel so welcome when I came to inspect your school. I really enjoyed having my lunch with you and talking to you in lessons and in the playground. I think you get on very well together, behave really well and work very hard. You like your lessons very much and you and your parents think your school is great. I agree with you that your school is outstanding.

Mrs Williams is an excellent headteacher and she works very hard with your teachers and all the other adults at school to make sure you have lots of fun while you learn as much as you can. Your teachers are extremely good and make your lessons very interesting. They keep a very close check on how well you are doing and make sure you get the help you need to make your work better. I have asked them to give you more chances to check your own work in lessons so you understand how well you are doing and what you need to do to make it even better.

All the adults at school think every one of you is very special and they look after you exceptionally well. You told me that you are very happy at school and feel extremely safe. This was good to hear because all the adults at school work very hard to help you feel this way. You get on very well with all the adults at school and they support you really well and give you lots of opportunities to be responsible for others. The buddies and school council do a great job and help to make your school a very enjoyable place to be.

I really enjoyed meeting you and wish you all the best for the future. Keep working hard and enjoy your time at Lons Infant School.

Alison Cogher

Lead inspector