

Lambourne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114952
Local Authority	ESSEX
Inspection number	290086
Inspection dates	30 April –1 May 2007
Reporting inspector	John Paull

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Filby
Headteacher	Mr Graham Alderton
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2001
School address	Hoe Lane Abridge Romford Essex RM4 1AU
Telephone number	01992812230
Fax number	01992815675

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Lambourne is smaller than most primary schools. Its pupils are nearly all of White British heritage, although there are a few from each of a small number of minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average. Attainment on entry varies considerably within each year group and sometimes from year to year. It is below average overall. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

The school holds a 2006 ActiveMark and is working towards both a Healthy Schools Award and the Bronze Eco-Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lambourne Primary is a good school, a judgement that matches its own evaluation. Good leadership and management, and an effective governing body, identify what needs to be done to promote continuing improvement. Successful initiatives have recently secured improvement, suggesting that the capacity to improve further is good. Good teaching, based on a good, broad curriculum, is resulting in pupils' good achievement. From starting points that are often below average, pupils reach average standards in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. This is reflected in the results of national tests. In 2006, for example, in all three subjects, results were broadly average. Analysis of pupils' performances, as well as their current work, shows that standards in reading are considerably higher than in writing, and that performance in science is not quite as good as in the other subjects. In writing and science, more able pupils do not consistently achieve at the higher levels that they could. Staff have responded with initiatives that focus on the more advanced skills in these subjects. It is too early for these initiatives to have worked through into improved national test results. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported effectively, so they make good progress towards their own targets. Some of them do very well indeed, reaching expected levels for their age. The relatively few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also achieve well and are often represented amongst the school's highest achievers. By Year 2, teachers' assessments indicate broadly average standards. Again, much better performance in reading than writing is evident. Children in the Reception class are well taught, so learn and achieve well. A good majority are likely to reach expected goals for their age.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall, although awareness of multicultural issues is not as strong as other elements. Nearly all pupils speak well of their school, and say they enjoy being there. They know much about healthy foods and the importance of exercise. They behave well, which contributes to each other's safety in and around the building. Their contributions to the community are outstanding, and are reflected in an excellent Eco-Council. This body consists of pupils and key adults. It promotes everyone's awareness of the total environment in and around the school. It has a remarkable effect on 'greening' the surroundings. Pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology allied to their willing sociability mean that their preparation for life beyond school is good.

All staff work hard in pupils' interests and build good partnerships with outside agencies. However, care, guidance and support are satisfactory, rather than good, as in the school's evaluation. This is because recently introduced procedures for assessment are not yet being used to full effect in setting individual targets, which all pupils then know and can apply to their own learning. Parents are welcomed into the school and their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive of what it provides. A typical comment explained that it '...is well run, offering good all round education for the children'. Inspectors agree. This all-round performance means that good value for money is achieved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils consistently attain levels above those normally expected, especially in writing and science.
- Use systems of assessment more consistently to set pupils' individual targets, ensuring that they understand how to apply such targets to improve their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. From below average starting points, good teaching produces good progress through the school and realistic targets are now met. Thus, broadly average standards are reached by the end of Year 6. Pupils read particularly well and many attain a level above that normally for their age. In writing and science, this is not apparent. In these subjects, more able pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they could. Leaders have identified reasons and measures to rectify the situation are in place and signs of improvement are evident from upward trends. Year 6 results in 2006 were broadly average, although above average in mathematics. This follows a successful focus on pupils' investigative and problem solving skills. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 also indicate good achievement with broadly average standards that are again better in reading than in writing. Progress is good in Reception and many children are on course to reach expected goals. Nearly all pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and some do very well, reaching the expected level for their age by Year 6. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress and are well represented amongst the school's highest achievers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy school and show positive attitudes to their work. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and positive relationships are established. A few pupils are occasionally distracted in class but they are well managed and the learning of others is not affected. Attendance is good and family holidays during term time are rightly discouraged. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy life style and staying safe. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good and they show respect and good awareness of the needs of others. Cultural development is satisfactory overall, although opportunities for pupils to gain first hand experience of other faiths and cultures in modern Britain are limited. Pupils carry out many responsibilities with pride and efficiency. The School Council representatives show a mature attitude to their role and value the things they have done to help improve their school. Pupils contribute outstandingly well to the community with their ideas and efforts to improve the environment and to create a 'green eco-school'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons have a strong sense of purpose, so pupils enjoy their learning and typically work hard to achieve good results. Well structured and stimulating tasks reflect pupils' different learning needs and capture their interest. However, while planned activities nearly always provide good challenge for average learners and for those who find learning difficult, they do not consistently stretch more able pupils. A good emphasis is apparent on encouraging precision in pupils' speaking and listening skills, which is helping them to contribute their ideas confidently. This approach is also beginning to have a positive impact on their choice of words when they write. The purpose of lessons is invariably explained to pupils and, at the end, teachers explore and make certain that such objectives have been met.

Learning support assistants work effectively in partnership with class teachers, ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties progress well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good in all stages. However, in Reception, a lack of internal space and too little cover outside restricts what can be done, limiting further improvement in teaching. In literacy, numeracy and science, subject leaders are successfully adapting what is taught to include more opportunities for pupils' investigative and analytical skills. This is seen as a first step to raising levels of challenge and interest for all pupils. The curriculum effectively meets the needs of those with learning difficulties through a combination of in-class support and carefully focused teaching. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. It includes outstanding involvement in community issues, including 'hands-on' opportunities in recycling, planting in the grounds and woodland work. The curriculum is further enhanced by good opportunities for sport and physical exercise. French lessons and visits and visitors further enrich what is taught.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This aspect is satisfactory. The school provides a warm, friendly and supportive climate for learning. Pupils are valued as individuals and well known to all staff. An effective system of awards is in place and pupils appreciate it. Playtimes are well supervised and a good range of activities are provided. The development of links with outside agencies is taken very seriously, thereby supporting effectively the care provided by staff. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements. Guidance for those with learning difficulties is well monitored and support is efficiently organised. While the use of assessment information to track pupils' progress is satisfactory, its use is not yet fully effective. Inconsistencies are apparent in ensuring precise targets for individual pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's monitoring and evaluation of provision are strong. Leadership of subjects is improving, as responsibilities are becoming more clearly defined and devolved, although several subject leaders are new to their posts, so not yet fully established. Understanding of how to improve as a team is nevertheless good. Key governors understand the school well and ask the right questions to ensure good improvement. They are active and supportive of the headteacher and staff, visiting frequently. The headteacher and other leaders are keen to build good links with parents. The home-school reading records are very informative, with teachers responding carefully to parents' questions about how to help. This linked guidance between home and school is contributing much to high standards in reading. Provision for children in Reception and for pupils with learning difficulties is well managed.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

3 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Lambourne Primary School, Abridge, Essex, RM4 1AU

Thank you for being so helpful when Mrs Ball and I visited your school. You did such a lot to make the two days run smoothly, speaking to us very clearly and letting us see your work as willingly as you did. We think that the standard of your work is about the same as that in most other primary schools. It is great that so many of you said that you like going to school. We both enjoyed our 'working lunch' with the School Council. We agree with them that your school is good and that you make good progress.

Here are some things that we particularly like about your school

- Your teachers teach you well, so you achieve well.
- Your teachers and parents or carers work together closely on your reading, which is of a high standard.
- Your behaviour is good.
- The Reception class prepares young children well, although it will be hard for it to get better still because of the lack of room inside and the lack of enough cover outside.
- Your ideas and work on improving the environment are excellent, and planned and explained particularly effectively by the children on the Eco-Council.

Here are the main things that we have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to do next

- Make sure that the children who can do harder work always have it set for them, especially in writing and science.
- Make sure that new ways to check your work are used frequently to set you your own targets, separate from the class ones, so you will know more precisely what you must do to make progress.

John W. Paull

Lead Inspector