

Lyminge Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118679
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291212
Inspection dates	1–2 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Denise Morris

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tricia Stewart
Headteacher	Michele Rowland
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2001
School address	Church Road Lyminge Folkestone CT18 8JA
Telephone number	01303 862367
Fax number	01303 862688

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a rural school serving several small local villages. There is a smaller than average number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Few pupils take free school meals. The mobility of the pupils is high. There have been significant staff changes over the past two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils develop high self-esteem and enjoy school life. Pupils are valued and because of this they behave in an exemplary way and have very positive attitudes to learning. They come to school regularly and their personal development is good. They work well together and show good understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles. Pupils work well with the community and are well prepared for their futures.

Pupils achieve well. Standards in the 2006 tests were broadly average, although above average in science, and overall achievement was shown to be improving. Standards vary in different year groups but recent improvements in provision have resulted in even better progress being made this year. This is because of good teaching and an exciting, new and practical curriculum that provides well for the pupils' interests and needs, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children enter school with the skills broadly expected for their age. They begin by making good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the very relevant activities provided and good teaching. They are just above average by the time they enter Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to achieve well in their lessons and pursue many exciting activities that help them to be independent in their learning. By the end of Year 2 pupils were above average in mathematics in 2006. The newly introduced phonics programme is good and has ensured that standards in reading and writing have improved this year. The good progress continues in Years 3 to 6 because pupils are taught how to consolidate these skills and become mature and independent learners. Standards have risen because of a more stable staffing situation than previously and increased checking on how things might be improved, with appropriate action being taken. This has resulted in Year 6 pupils exceeding their targets this year.

Teaching and learning are good across the school. The curriculum is relevant and enriched by extra high quality activities, which are available to all pupils. The quality of care and support that pupils receive is good. Pupils are safe and secure because the school works hard to ensure that they are not at risk. However, more could be done to make sure that assessments and pupils' academic guidance are consistent across all subjects. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is not tracked precisely enough to identify the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Past difficulties with staffing have now eased and there is a stable senior management team, which is having a very positive impact on improvements. Many new procedures have been introduced that are beginning to move the school forward. Better monitoring has resulted in improved achievement for boys, higher standards in science, and improvements in teaching and learning and in the pupils' skills in the use of phonics. The governing body makes a valuable contribution to the work of the school. Because of the good improvement in the key issues for action in the previous inspection report, the improvements in provision and achievement, the settled staffing and the strong senior management team, there is a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Staff should develop consistent assessment and tracking procedures in all subjects so that pupils, especially those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, know how well they are doing and what they should do next in order to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In the 2006 national tests, standards were broadly average, and above average in science. Standards have improved significantly this year as a result of stable staffing and several new procedures to raise standards across the school. Pupils consequently achieve well and make good progress in their lessons. On entry to the Foundation Stage, children attain standards that are in line with other children of their age. They achieve well in Reception because of good teaching and some exciting activities that encourage them to find things out for themselves. In 2006 more children achieved higher scores in their end-of-year assessments than other children locally and nationally. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to make good progress in their lessons. The achievement of ambitious targets in classes this year shows that standards overall in reading, writing and mathematics have risen. This is owing in part to the new approaches to teaching which have been introduced. For example, a new phonics programme for teaching reading and a practical approach to mathematics have begun this year. In Years 3 to 6 the good progress continues. Monitoring records show that teaching in these classes has improved this year and this has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement and on their skills. Pupils in Year 6 have exceeded their challenging targets this year. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve as well as other pupils in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They passionately believe in their motto 'Be safe, be happy'. Children in Reception enjoy learning and work happily and safely together, developing their self-esteem and confidence well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they are strongly aware of their responsibilities to each other. Pupils celebrate their spirituality through the excellent way they interact with other people. They enjoy coming to school very much and this is reflected in their high attendance figures. They behave outstandingly well; invariably they are respectful and considerate.

Pupils are conscious of following healthy lifestyles and most pick the nutritious options at lunchtime. The school council and the business assemblies are effective forums where pupils feel they can express their views on health and other important issues and make a positive contribution. Pupils benefit from participating in the daily 'wake up and shake up' routine. They adopt good safe practices because of the high priority the school gives to ensuring their safety. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 are trained to be mediators so that they can confidently resolve minor conflicts in the playground. Although contributions to the community are good, there is more the school can do to promote external links more widely. Pupils learn sign language as a life skill and make good use of it in assemblies. Pupils are preparing well for their future life and work outside school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good in almost all lessons ensuring that pupils make good progress and achieve well. The quality of teaching has improved this year because of focused monitoring and high levels of support for staff. A key strength is the way in which teachers promote the

personal development of the pupils through independent learning. This results in very positive relationships and some exemplary behaviour, which means that pupils listen well, work well together and respond politely to questions. Questions are used effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and encourage them to find answers. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support small groups or individual pupils, enabling those with learning difficulties and disabilities to achieve as well as other pupils. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' learning is not rigorous enough in some subjects. It is good in English, but in other subjects pupils do not always understand what they need to do next to improve their skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a rich and varied curriculum for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children in Reception enjoy a stimulating programme of activities focusing well on all areas of learning.

Information and communication technology flourishes in the school and pupils use these resources well. Pupils are confident and articulate when they speak because the curriculum provides ample time to develop these skills. Pupils do well in science because lessons have a strong investigative approach. The way literacy is delivered is having a good impact on the way pupils are learning to read and write. Practical approaches to learning are having a positive impact on achievement in many subjects, but these approaches have yet to be implemented in all subjects.

The school offers a wide range of popular out-of-school activities. Year 6 pupils take part in a residential trip where they develop good relationships and learn to become independent and responsible individuals.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are cared for well and there are good procedures for health and safety. However, pupils are not always aware of the level they are working at or what they need to do to improve because teachers' use of assessment information to set challenging targets is inconsistent.

Parents are quick to praise the school and pupils also believe they are well cared for. The behaviour policy works effectively to promote exemplary conduct. Staff know pupils well and social development is promoted sensitively. Vulnerable pupils and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities are identified quickly and supported carefully, so that they gain in confidence and know they are safe. However, their progress is not monitored and tracked precisely enough to ensure that they understand how well they are doing and what they should do next. Child protection procedures are clear and widely understood. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure. All pupils were confident that they had an adult to talk with should they feel the need to discuss personal matters.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher cares deeply about the school and has a clear vision of what she wants to achieve. Past difficulties, including a high mobility of staff in recent years, have had an impact

on the school's ability to make improvements. There is now a settled staff and an established senior management team who together with the headteacher have created a warm and caring ethos in which all pupils are valued. It is a fully inclusive school where pupils want to learn. This has resulted in high quality personal development by pupils. The stability that is now in place, along with the drive to improve what this has brought, is now helping to raise standards across the school. The senior managers have a very positive impact on all areas of development. Good new procedures have been established to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. These have already helped to improve standards in mathematics in Year 2 and in science in Year 6. They are beginning to work across the school. The drive to improve teaching has led to stability in staffing and a high proportion of good teaching across all classes. Procedures to improve boys' achievement are working, and regular monitoring of teaching has highlighted areas that require further improvement. Consequently, leaders have a clear view of what they need to do next and have rightly identified the main areas for development that this inspection has confirmed. The governing body is supportive and aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They carry out their statutory duties well. Links with other establishments are good and parents are fully involved in the work of the school. They are extremely supportive and the vast majority indicate that their children are very happy at school. There has been good improvement in the issues identified at the previous inspection and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Annex A

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?	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	2
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	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	2
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	2
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lyminge CofE Primary School, Lyminge, Folkestone, CT18 8JA

Thank you for your help on our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing all about the interesting things you do at school. We think yours is a good school.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school. You come to school regularly and your behaviour is excellent. You make good progress and you achieve well. Teaching is good. Your teachers and the other staff work hard to take good care of you. Your headteacher and senior leaders keep you safe and help you achieve. They provide a warm and welcoming place for you to enjoy. They lead the school well. There is one important area that we think the school could do better and you could help with this by making sure you ask about the next steps in learning:

- provide new ways of showing pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, exactly how they are progressing in all subjects and make sure that they know what the next steps in learning are

Thank you again for your help.

Yours faithfully

Denise Morris Lead inspector