

Loxwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125845
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	293379
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Eira Gill

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	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Vause
Headteacher	T J McMath
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001
School address	Nicholsfield Loxwood Billingshurst RH14 0SR
Telephone number	01403 752207
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Loxwood Primary is a small school where most pupils come from a White British background and a very small minority speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average.

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 with outstanding features that is at the heart of the village. The headteacher has been highly successful in creating a very calm, close and industrious community and standards are steadily improving. The care, guidance and support of pupils and their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils and their parents are fully aware of their individual targets for learning. Two years ago pupils and staff worked together to compose a shortlist (The Loxwood Way) of the expectations of behaviour to ensure courtesy and respect. This has ensured that excellent attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour have been maintained. Pupils say, 'We have a small-sized copy of 'The Loxwood Way' that we keep in our book bags if we need reminding.'

Pupils show an exceptional understanding of a healthy lifestyle, with total regard for the safety of themselves and others. Parents are strongly appreciative of all the school offers. A typical comment was, 'It's a fab school'. A new parent said, 'In the space of 12 weeks our daughter is a changed child – she has gained confidence and is proud of herself. We are absolutely delighted'.

By the time the pupils leave school, standards are above average overall and well above in reading, mathematics and science. All pupils attained the average Level 4 grade in all subjects. However, in writing in Year 6, standards are average and the progress of the higher-attaining pupils is not as good as it is in other subjects. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement is good overall for all groups of pupils, including the children in the Reception Year and those with learning difficulties. This reflects the good teaching and learning throughout the school, although methods of teaching writing are not always tightly focused enough on the small steps in learning necessary to raise standards further, especially for the higher-attaining pupils.

The curriculum is good and its enrichment is outstanding. For a school of this size it has a very wide range and number of after-school activities that include numerous sporting opportunities – even golf! Last term, the school's cross-country team came second in the Horsham Schools Race. Provision for art and design and design and technology is good and French is also taught.

Leadership and management are good, with a headteacher who is passionate about giving his pupils every opportunity to take part in sporting events to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The tracking of pupils' progress through the school has recently been improved and, in most respects, is providing good and accurate assessment of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Governors give good support and challenge to the school. Based on the quality of self-evaluation and based on recent improvements, the school has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing, especially for the higher-attaining pupils, by ensuring that teachers give the small steps needed for improvement a tighter focus.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Children enter Reception with broadly average standards and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and well above in mathematics and science. The standards reached in 2007 are higher than last year in mathematics and science

standards are well above average in reading but average in writing because few pupils attain the higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who are in the early stages of learning English make good progress because of effective teaching. The school has met its targets in mathematics and reading but not in writing. Children make a good start in the Reception class, although their language skills are not as good as they are in mathematics when they enter Year 1.

Standards overall are above average by the end of Year 2, a level maintained for the last three years. This year the girls outperformed the boys in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at the higher levels in this year's national tests. Boys' progress is good since they started from a low base.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. In assembly, even the youngest pupils concentrate and behave exceptionally well. The pupils' unusually well-developed emotional maturity is a direct outcome of the very strong relationships between staff and pupils as well as the excellent range of opportunities to take part in team games and group activities such as drama, choir and orchestra after lessons. Pupils' social skills are very well developed. They chat easily and say what a happy place the school is and how teachers give them a warm welcome in the morning. Attendance is above average and is a natural result of pupils' great enjoyment of school. Pupils feel extremely valued, safe and secure and talk knowledgeably about healthy diets and safe lifestyles and follow them. Pupils take part from an early age in a very wide range of sporting activities provided by the school. Pupils are developing generally good literacy and numeracy skills to prepare them for the world of work. They make an excellent contribution to the school and village community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school, with some outstanding teaching observed in Year 6. Teaching is generally well planned. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and no time is wasted. Effective features such as warm relationships, valuing of pupils' contributions and the use of the outdoor learning environment are evident throughout the school. Lessons are lively and interesting, using excellent resources, and all teachers are skilled at using the interactive whiteboards. Methods of teaching writing are not always focused tightly enough on the small steps needed for improvement, especially for those pupils who are capable of achieving more at the higher levels. Older children say they particularly enjoy their homework and explain that teachers make it fun. Marking is diligent and generally informs the pupils well about what they need to learn next. Teaching assistants are supportive of pupils but, very occasionally, their contribution to pupils' learning in the opening sessions of lessons lacks a specific focus.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The after-school enrichment is outstanding and is one of the major reasons why pupils' personal development is excellent and academic progress has improved

overall. Further strategies to improve learning have been put into place fairly recently by enriching and enlivening the curriculum by teaching literacy, for example, through drama and art. Good evidence was seen of above-average work and lessons in drama, art and design and design and technology. Although the new initiatives have had an impact on raising standards in mathematics and science, there is still a way to go to lift the achievement of the higher-attaining pupils in writing. Pupils' cultural understanding and sporting skills are being widened and developed well by an unusually broad range of after-school clubs that enrich the curriculum hugely. Golf is available, for example, and cross-country running. Links with the nursery that is accommodated within the school grounds are good. Excellent links with other schools and organisations ensure pupils take part in many sporting events. Good improvement since the last inspection has been made to ensure adequate equipment is available for the children in the Reception class.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding induction procedures ensure that children in the Reception class make a confident start and make good progress. Child protection procedures are well established and proper checks are in place for all adults working in the school. Health and safety procedures are rigorous. The pupils say they are extremely well cared for by all adults. They say, 'The teachers are always there for you.' This is giving pupils plenty of confidence and is having a very positive effect on their outstanding personal development and good achievement. One said, 'I feel comfortable with my friends – they wouldn't laugh at me. I can tell them anything.' The school values its strong relationships with the parents, the community and other agencies.

Pupils with learning difficulties are identified early and they are well supported. Pupils know their targets for learning well and can give examples. One said, 'I need to vary the way I start sentences'. Excellent communication exists with parents, who are invited to meetings when they are given a copy of their children's targets at specific intervals throughout the year. The systems to track the pupils' progress and set them targets are generally very effective, though less so with respect to pupils' writing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The headteacher's leadership of the care of pupils and their personal development is outstanding. He has persevered to ensure that an extremely wide range of after-school clubs is available to children from Year 2 upwards. These opportunities have had a very positive knock-on effect on the pupils' excellent personal and spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Purposeful leadership has created small class groups that enable teachers to interact more closely with the pupils and this is one of the reasons for improvement in standards in mathematics and science this year. The school's monitoring procedures keep all aspects of its work under review and it is well aware, for example, that the teaching of writing needs more focus and is taking steps to improve it next year.

Self-evaluation is generally accurate and has been used effectively to put improvements into place such as better planning to enrich the curriculum by linking subjects to ensure that all pupils, particularly the boys, respond well in lessons. Senior leaders have worked well as a team on this initiative and this has had a considerable impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, which

are excellent. The school enjoys extremely positive partnerships with parents, the church and the community. Governors are well informed and are fully involved in school planning. They bring a considerable breadth of expertise from their own backgrounds and are prepared to challenge the school when necessary.

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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?	1
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?	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	1
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?	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.

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Loxwood Primary School, Loxwood, West Sussex RH14 0SR

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I really enjoyed talking with you and observing your lessons. You were all very friendly and polite throughout the day. Your headteacher has created a very calm community where you all feel extremely safe and well looked after. I think your school is a good school.

Here are the things that I found to be best about your school:

- Your headteacher, senior leaders and the governors take great care of you and make sure teaching is good.
- Your behaviour is exemplary and you have excellent attitudes to your work.
- You really enjoy school and attend very regularly.
- You all have an exceptionally good understanding of a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe.
- You make good progress in reading, mathematics and science, as a result of good teaching.
- Those of you who find it a little bit more difficult to read and do mathematics are making good progress with the help of the teaching assistants.
- You have a huge choice of clubs to go to at lunchtime or after school and every opportunity to do well in sport and music.
- The way you take responsibility, for example, those of you in the School Council who have been working very hard to raise funds for children in Africa. Well done!

I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do the following thing to help you make better progress:

- Make sure that you are given more opportunities in lessons to take those important small steps in your learning to help you achieve better in writing.

Thank you once again and good luck in the future. With best wishes Eira Gill ? Lead Inspector