

Langland Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110354
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	295370
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Paula Protherough

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Rabe
Headteacher	Mr Richard Pickard
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2006
School address	Langland Road Netherfield Milton Keynes MK6 4HA
Telephone number	01908 670712
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large urban primary school serves a mobile and diverse community in the most deprived area of Milton Keynes. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds which include immigrants, asylum seekers and a large group of black and black African heritage. A quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at over 46%, is well above the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties (LDD) and statements of special educational needs (SEN) is average. A significantly large number of pupils arrive or leave during the course of each school year. A Children's Centre is soon to open on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school which now provides a satisfactory education for the pupils in the community. The school was inspected in March 2006 and given a Notice to Improve. Since then the dedicated and committed leadership team, governing body and staff, with good support and guidance from the Local Authority, have successfully begun to address the issues raised in that inspection. The school is now soundly placed to continue this progress in the future.

In accordance with Section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The previous inspection identified the need to raise standards and achievement and improve the quality of teaching. Standards in most areas are now rising and pupil achievement has improved especially in mathematics and science. A thorough programme of training and monitoring by senior staff and the Local Authority has ensured that the quality and consistency of teaching have improved.

Although standards remain below average they have risen since the last inspection. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily. However, the school recognises there is still some way to go in developing literacy skills. Handwriting and presentation is a whole school concern and currently too few pupils achieve the higher levels in writing in Year 2 and Year 6 assessments. This is being addressed through a new handwriting scheme and improved teaching of spelling and phonics. An intensive programme is also in place to develop family approaches to support basic literacy skills. Parents and carers have been encouraged to attend workshops and to read with their children; this is already having a positive impact in the reception and nursery where parents now have a much greater involvement.

The school now assesses and tracks the progress of pupils from the time they enter the reception class through to Year 6. This helps to identify individuals and groups of pupils who need additional support or who may be underachieving as well as those who may have the potential to reach higher levels. The school can now demonstrate that most pupils make satisfactory progress and reach targets which are realistic in terms of their abilities. However, teachers do not always make the best use of this information when planning their lessons, especially for more able pupils.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Adults are particularly successful in building positive relationships with parents and developing children's social skills. The children benefit from a well considered thematic approach to learning. Recently this approach has been extended into Year 1 and the current 'space' topic provides a rich and exciting range of activities. This is a good example of a creative approach to curriculum planning, but it is not yet consistently replicated elsewhere in the school. Currently pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Pupils receive very good support from learning mentors who actively promote attendance and good behaviour and develop productive links with parents. The school works well with outside agencies who support the school's work within the community. The recent appointment of the Children's Centre manager to the school is resulting in new initiatives such as 'Stay and Play' which successfully encourages parents and younger brothers and sisters into the school to share activities with school staff.

Relationships in school are good and pupils generally work hard and behave well. They are proud of their school and appreciate opportunities to take responsibility in roles such as the School Council.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading and writing across the school.
- Use assessment information to ensure that work is appropriately matched to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly the more able.
- Improve opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. From a low starting point, when they start school, the children benefit from good provision in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress in both classes and are well prepared for Year 1 although few achieve the expected learning goals for five-year-olds. Many have good physical development and are independent and self reliant.

The Key Stage 1 pupils build on this good start and make satisfactory progress particularly in mathematics where in 2006 standards rose to above the national average. In English pupils make satisfactory progress. Despite a rising trend in results standards are still below average particularly in the higher levels in reading and writing. The school's data show the positive impact of improvements made to the teaching in these subjects. For instance, unmoderated assessments for 2007 show a small increase in the number of more able pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and writing.

Key Stage 2 assessments for 2006 showed a marked improvement in science and mathematics. Although results are still below average, pupils made better than average progress. However, standards in English were significantly lower than average. The school has rightly focussed resources and energies on raising standards in literacy. As a result, the pupils' work is improving. They are now making satisfactory progress although presentation and handwriting need further improvement. Pupils with LDD and SEN make steady progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy assemblies, are respectful, listen carefully, and show appreciation for the achievements of others. They raise money for charities and have a sound understanding of right and wrong. Pupils of different ages and ethnic backgrounds play together harmoniously and have a satisfactory appreciation of other cultures.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is satisfactory. Most are keen to learn and behave well in lessons where they are motivated and engaged by practical, meaningful activities. Playtimes are lively but pupils show a sensible concern for safety. Pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles reflects their work in gaining a Healthy School award. Pupils respond well

to opportunities and support available to them; have good relationships with learning mentors and support staff. They take on roles which develop responsibility such as the School Council, buddies, reading partners and monitors. Some older pupils are trained to resolve playground disputes. They would appreciate the opportunity to use their initiative more often. Recent improvements in achievement in literacy and numeracy and pupils' use of Information and Communication Technology are providing them with necessary skills for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 where highly committed teams ensure a consistent approach to planning lessons. Since the previous inspection teaching has improved as a result of the comprehensive monitoring programme by the school leadership team and subject leaders supported by the Local Authority. This includes classroom observation, learning logs, book trawls and moderation.

A handbook to guide new teachers has resulted in greater consistency in marking, planning, organisation of lessons and behaviour management. Teachers work in teams to share their expertise. The most successful lessons are stimulating and practical with opportunities for investigation rather than the reliance on worksheets seen in some lessons. In successful lessons pupils respond with enthusiasm and are especially engaged when they are actively involved in drama, discussion and practical activities. For example in Year 1 pupils acted out the space landing in preparation for report writing. However, this is not yet common practice. Appropriately challenging opportunities for the more able pupils are not yet consistently in place. Pupils benefit from the use of interactive whiteboards which are well used to support learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6. It is good in the nursery and reception classes where much of children's learning is drawn from stimulating topics which widen their experience whilst developing early literacy and mathematical skills. The curriculum meets statutory requirements but has an emphasis on basic literacy and mathematical skills. With standards rising the school recognises the need to develop creativity and broaden the curriculum. Activities such as Arts week show that when subjects are linked across a common theme pupils are motivated and engaged. Pupils also achieve higher standards during these weeks because they apply their mathematical and literacy skills in purposeful work in other subjects. The curriculum is enriched by a popular range of sporting activities, clubs, visits and visitors including residential visits for older pupils and links with the church and wider community. The school provides the opportunity for all pupils to learn musical instruments. The breakfast club is a helpful start to the day for a large number of pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory with some very good features. Many pupils come from challenging home circumstances. The school offers a wide range of initiatives to develop and raise self esteem, promote healthy living and encourage pupils to be valued members of the school and wider community.

The clear routines in all classes help newly arrived pupils to settle in quickly. Pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties are well supported, especially when withdrawn for small group work. Pupils feel safe and able to ask for help, report that staff deal effectively with the few incidences of bullying. However records of safeguarding procedures do not yet meet current requirements. Useful assessment and tracking systems are in place and everyday assessment is used to involve pupils in their own learning, with objectives and success criteria given at the start of lessons. These are then checked at the end of the lesson so that pupils can understand their own progress. The plans for pupils with learning disabilities have clear targets. These pupils are well supported in their academic development and in building their self confidence.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. In the last year the leadership team has taken many positive steps to address the issues for improvement through its clear aims and objectives and a coherent action plan. These have been successfully implemented by leadership team across the school. There is a shared understanding of the needs of the school and all staff are involved in the drive for improvement. For instance, by monitoring the quality of education provided.

School improvement planning is thorough and carefully linked to resources available. The headteacher secures additional funding by championing the needs of the school in the wider community. This often benefits the pupils, for example in the provision of music lessons and the new conservatory where the Learning Mentors are based.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. There has been sharp focus on improvement to teaching and learning. As a result pupils are beginning to achieve more and standards are rising. School leaders are aware of the areas that still need to be addressed to maintain this upward trend. The governing body, with the support of the Local Authority, fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily.

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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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
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

25 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Llangland Community School, Milton Keynes, MK6 4HA

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work and lessons. As you probably know, in the last inspection over a year ago, your school was told that it had to improve.

We found that your school has improved and that you are now doing a lot better in science and mathematics and your English is improving. The teaching is better too and many more of your lessons are helping you to learn. Now your school is satisfactory and well placed to continue to improve in the future.

We liked the way you get on well with each other. You are generally well behaved and work hard in lessons, especially when they are practical and interesting. It was good to hear that you enjoy clubs and other activities and to see that you come to school regularly. You show in your work that you enjoy special weeks such as Art Week and if more of your lessons were like these we think that you would have more opportunities to shine. We also think that you could still do better in English, especially writing, if you had opportunities to write more in other subjects. Some of you do not take enough care in your presentation and your handwriting could be neater! We have also asked the teachers to make sure that you are all set work that is not too easy or too hard, but challenging enough to make you think.

Good luck in the future.

Yours sincerely

Paula Protherough Lead Inspector