

# Lady Modiford's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113481
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	298553
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Burghart

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	97
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	C Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gavin Hamilton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2006
<b>School address</b>	Walkhampton Yelverton PL20 6JR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01822 853277
<b>Fax number</b>	01822 855632

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a small school drawing pupils from a rural area on the edge of Dartmoor. Virtually all pupils are of White British origin and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is close to the national average. Children's attainment when they first join Reception is generally as expected but, as year groups are small, it varies year on year.

When the school was last inspected, it was found to be in need of significant improvement and given a Notice to Improve. The school received a monitoring visit from an inspector in January 2007 when it was found to have made good progress overall but inadequate progress with regard to provision for Reception.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. It has made very good progress since it was inspected in June 2006 and is now a good school. Strengths in pupils' good personal development and well-being have been built upon. Moral and social aspects are now outstanding, and skills which will prepare pupils for future study and life in general have been improved to good. Pupils are polite, friendly and well behaved and, for the vast majority of the time, they enjoy school. Pupils clearly feel safe in school because care, guidance and support are good. Academic guidance, which was a weakness, is now good. This is based on effective assessment and record keeping. Good use is made of this information to set targets and guide pupils to make improvements.

Following staff changes and the reorganisation of classes at the end of the autumn term, provision for children in Reception has been improved from inadequate to outstanding. Excellent teaching and support are enabling these children to make good progress and reach at least the standards expected of them by the time they are six. Throughout the school, teaching and learning are now good because planning takes account of different ability levels and makes objectives clear. Mixed age classes are managed well. Teaching assistants give good support to groups and individuals, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities continue to be well provided for. Standards are above average in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and improved to well above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. Pupils are typically achieving well. The exception is in writing, where pupils are making relatively less progress. This is most obvious in Years 2, 3 and 4 and, for the most part, is the result of gaps in pupils' previous learning. The school is taking steps to overcome this, but initiatives have yet to have full impact.

The curriculum is satisfactory. In the last year the school has tended to emphasise literacy and numeracy. This has meant less time and effort has been available to other subjects and has had a negative effect on the balance of the curriculum. For example, some of the more creative elements of music and design and technology have had less attention. The school is aware of this. Subject leaders, whose contribution to leadership and management is much improved, are now working to develop cross curricular links. This approach aims to ensure that everything is covered in sufficient detail and also maintains pupils' interest.

Good signs in the impact of the school's leadership and management, reported in an inspector's monitoring visit in January 2007, have been capitalised upon. The school has benefited from good support from the local authority. It is well led and managed by the headteacher and staff. They work well together as a team and are having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The school's marked progress involved making decisions which were not always popular with some parents. Nevertheless, the school has demonstrated that it has a good capacity for even further improvement based on this year's very successful track record.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve how well pupils achieve in writing, developing their spelling, sentence construction and use of vocabulary.
- Develop the curriculum to broaden opportunities for pupils' learning and to ensure that all subjects are given appropriate emphasis.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and standards are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. This is a marked improvement over the picture reported at the last inspection. The inconsistency in pupils' progress, which was a criticism of the last report, has been overcome.

Pupils of all abilities now make good progress as a result of much better teaching and academic support. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are real strengths and are used very well in all lessons. However, there are still relative weaknesses in writing, for example in spelling, sentence construction and the use of vocabulary, due to gaps in pupils' previous learning. This is particularly the case in Years 2, 3 and 4. The introduction of more challenging targets, for the school as a whole and for individual pupils, has raised expectations, driven up standards and enhanced the value the school adds to pupils' performance. This success is most evident in the good all round achievement of the current Year 6 pupils. Assessments show good improvement in English, sustained good results in science, and outstanding improvement in mathematics. More able pupils are doing particularly well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being continue to be good. Good spiritual development reflects the school's Christian and caring ethos, with pupils appreciating not only different faiths but being sensitive to the beauty of art and nature. Cultural development is also good, with pupils developing a suitable awareness of different customs and lifestyles. Moral and social development is outstanding. Excellent progress in Reception, particularly in the way children relate to and consider each other's feelings, forms the basis for pupils working together very effectively throughout the school. Pupils have a strong sense of what is right and proper, and make use of this quality in their good contribution to the school as a community. For example, pupils help to devise class rules and act as peer mediators to defuse potential arguments. Pupils have a good understanding of how to use equipment safely and are well aware of how they can get fit and eat healthily. They show that they really enjoy most of what is on offer at school and for the majority attendance is good. 'We like it here. Everyone is friendly!' was a typical comment. The overall profile of attendance, which is satisfactory rather than good, is the result of holidays taken in term time. The school continues to work hard to reduce this.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. School and local authority monitoring records and some lessons seen during the inspection show that teaching is sometimes outstanding. This is a huge improvement since the school's last inspection. Substantially better understanding of how pupils learn, much more effective planning for different ability and age groups in the same class, and the now successful use of information from assessments to set targets, underpin good learning. Except in writing, where the school knows there is more to do to, the impact of better quality teaching can be seen in higher standards and much better progress rates. Strengths and areas for development in teaching have been well analysed and good practice is being built upon. There is a very good team spirit and sharing of ideas and expertise. Staff are keen to

take on new ideas and try new methods and, as a result, are making the most of the new interactive whiteboards. They are aiming to develop pupils' skills of independent working being promoted so expertly in Reception and Year 1. Outstanding teaching and support in Reception very successfully provide children with opportunities indoors and out to learn through a mix of play and more formal activities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Although improved in some ways, for example in how literacy and numeracy are planned for, the overall curriculum remains satisfactory. Some subjects have been the focus of less attention during the school's drive to improve. This has reduced the time and emphasis placed, for example, on music and design and technology. As a result, pupils' creative and physical opportunities have been restricted. New planning and more effective management by subject coordinators are beginning to redress this imbalance, but the school is aware that it needs to review the curriculum as a whole. A continued strength of the curriculum is the support for personal, social and health education, and in the way in which good links with the church, extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors are used to enrich learning. Planning for Reception has been significantly improved and is very securely rooted in the national Foundation Stage curriculum. Children are excited by what is on offer. Learning is fun!

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school takes good care of its pupils. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety are effective. Since the last full report, systems to assess and record pupils' progress have been firmly established in English and mathematics. This model is beginning to be used in other curriculum areas but is not yet embedded in all subjects. Staff know pupils well. Good analysis and evaluation of assessment information are used successfully as the basis for teachers' good marking. Teachers set pupils challenging targets and are careful to show pupils how to improve their work. Pupils' enthusiasm, rising standards, and pupils' good achievement are testaments to the success of this system.

Some parents feel that communications are not good enough. However, there are plenty of examples of good and developing links between school and home. For example, more informative reports show how pupils are progressing, and there are joint meetings to discuss new teaching methods. The views of the majority of parents who contacted inspectors can be summed up by one parent who wrote, 'The staff are very approachable. This is a welcoming and happy environment.'

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and staff make an effective team. With good support and advice from the local authority and diocese, the school has come to an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Change has been very effectively managed, with a marked impact on provision, most notably in terms of what is on offer for Reception, the quality of teaching, and the use made of assessment information. All teachers now play a greater part in the school's

management, and leadership roles have been particularly well developed in relation to English, mathematics and information and communication technology.

The school has very successfully addressed its most significant weaknesses. Much improved monitoring of teaching and learning has resulted in the sharing of good practice and further development of lesson and subject planning. There is a clear vision for the future, shared by staff and governors, and a strong commitment to 'getting it right'. This approach underpins the school's now good capacity to make further improvements. Governance is improved and is now satisfactory. Governors continue to be supportive of the school and are in a better position to evaluate the impact of management decisions on pupils' learning.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	1
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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**

22 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lady Modiford's CE VA Primary School, Walkhampton PL20 6JR

Thank you for your warm welcome on our recent visit, especially those of you who met with Mrs Hurd and those who looked after me at lunchtime. The school can be proud of your friendly, polite attitudes.

I am sure you will be very pleased to hear that the school has made the improvements that it was asked to make after it was inspected last year. In fact it has done better than this and is now a good school. You have played your part by behaving well and working hard. Standards have gone up and you are making good progress. Well done!

- Here are some of the highlights.
- Teaching and support for children in Reception is excellent.
- Throughout the school the teachers and their assistants are doing a good job in helping you to learn.
- You are growing up as sensible, considerate, healthy young people and are well prepared for the future.
- Staff take good care of you. They try hard to show you how can make improvements and do your best.
- The school is well run.
- In order to be even better the school should:
  - make sure you do as well in writing as you do in reading, mathematics and science
  - improve the way different subjects are planned for to make sure you can learn all that you have to learn.

You can help by keeping up the good work.

Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Mike Burghart Lead Inspector