

Lambs Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109830
Local Authority	Wokingham Borough Council
Inspection number	310114
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2008
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Angela Hyde
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Finn
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2004
School address	Back Lane Spencers Wood Reading RG7 1JB
Telephone number	01189 883820
Fax number	01189 887448

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves the village of Spencers Wood on the outskirts of Reading. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, particularly those who struggle with reading and writing or find it difficult to always behave well, is very much higher than that found nationally. There is additional provision for up to ten pupils with physical disabilities who are fully integrated within mainstream classes. The school has achieved Healthy Schools Status, the Sport England Activemark, Artsmark Silver and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school does not rest on its laurels; it continually seeks improvement. Pupils enjoy coming to school very much and achieve well. Parents too, believe the school, '...Has a strong caring, inclusive culture and gives pupils a positive attitude towards education throughout their life'.

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by age 11 years. The school has successfully addressed a reduction in the proportion attaining the higher levels in science and pupils are well on track to reach their challenging targets this year. All groups of pupils, including those who struggle with reading and writing and those with physical difficulties, make good progress and achieve well.

Achievement is good because teaching and learning are good. Teachers relate very well to their pupils and have high expectations of their work and behaviour. Levels of challenge are good because class teachers use assessment information well to set realistic yet challenging targets for pupils to achieve. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas and be responsible for their own learning so their progress is not always as rapid as it could be.

Another reason behind the school's success is the outstanding level of pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils feel very safe, have very positive attitudes to work and are very keen to learn. These are key ingredients in ensuring their good progress as they move through the school. Pupils take great pride in their responsibilities, support each other extremely well and make an excellent contribution to their community. Pupils' determination to succeed and very good attendance are further evidence of their enjoyment and commitment to learning. This is excellent preparation for future life and learning.

Care, guidance and support are good overall with exceptional strengths in all aspects of pastoral care. Class teachers are good at checking pupils' progress and using this information to plan challenging tasks and activities that are well matched to individual needs. Pupils are increasingly involved in self-assessment and target setting. They believe it helps them become more knowledgeable about what they need to improve. However, this is not yet consistent across the school.

The curriculum is of good quality. It meets the basic academic needs of pupils well, and supports their social and personal development extremely effectively through initiatives to encourage healthy living and staying safe. Teachers are constantly looking at new and creative ways to plan themes and projects to capture pupils' imaginations and spur them on to work even harder. In addition, the focus weeks, residential trips, clubs and activities add much to pupils' motivation to learn, work hard and succeed.

All the adults are constantly looking at ways to improve the curriculum so that learning is full of liveliness, energy and activity. Senior managers monitor the school's work effectively and have an accurate understanding of its main strengths and relative weaknesses. However, they recognise that the systems for monitoring improvements do not help them to measure easily the impact of changes in terms of improved performance against its challenging targets. There is a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children enter school from a wide range of pre-school settings and experiences. Very good induction procedures ensure they quickly settle in a warm, fun and orderly environment. Most children join the school with abilities that are above those expected for the age groups. However, there is considerably variation in some year groups. The well-planned and exciting curriculum successfully meets each child's needs. Children happily engage with the many opportunities to develop their writing, reading and mathematical skills. They make good progress because teaching is of consistently good quality. Most children reach the levels expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1 and a very good number exceed them. This prepares them well for the next stage in their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers capitalise on opportunities during lessons for pupils to work independently and use their initiative in order to sustain rapid progress and produce high quality outcomes.
- Review the systems for measuring the success of curriculum innovations so that senior managers and governors can more easily identify its impact in terms of improved performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Given their starting points, all groups of pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils aged 11 years are well on track to meet their challenging targets this year and attain higher than average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils aged 7 years are also achieving well. Achievement is good because teachers are tracking pupils' progress and using the resulting information to address quickly any underachievement. These detailed and regular assessments show that all groups of pupils are making good progress as they move from year to year.

Those pupils who struggle with reading and writing, and those with physical disabilities make good progress and achieve well. This occurs because of the generally good quality help and support they receive both in and out of the classroom.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils try very hard, enjoy their lessons and are extremely keen to do well. They are articulate, thoughtful, confident, friendly and helpful. A small minority of parents raised concerns about the behaviour of a very few pupils. However, inspectors observed exemplary behaviour both in lessons and on the playground. Those very few pupils identified as having specific difficulty maintaining high standards of behaviour at all times are extremely well supported and have appropriate measures in place to modify their behaviour. Pupils show great respect for the interests and feelings of everyone at school whatever their backgrounds or disabilities. Their attendance is very good. Pupils have an exceptionally well-developed understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and all have a trusted adult they can turn to for help and advice. They make an exceptional contribution to their school community by carrying out responsible jobs such as playground buddies, play leaders and school councillors and through charity collections,

projects and competitions. The good level of pupils' basic skills helps ensure that preparation for the next phase of their education and the world of work is exceptionally good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In the very best lessons, teaching is innovative, stimulating and challenging. For example, pupils are able to explore their own ideas in mathematics and science, solving problems and forming simple hypotheses. Pupils are usually engrossed and make considerably better progress than might be expected. A further strength of the teaching is the way adults use different strategies, such as 'talking partners', to clarify, reinforce and consolidate learning. Well-directed teaching assistants provide considerable support to pupils and teachers and contribute significantly to effective learning especially for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the introductions to some lessons can be overlong and complicated. Consequently, there are missed opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas and be responsible for their own learning. This reduces the time for them to produce high quality work and their progress is not as rapid as it could be.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is continually innovating to ensure the broad and balanced curriculum is both exciting and creative. Opportunities to develop pupils' personal and social development are very well organised and result in high quality outcomes in these areas of the school's provision. All pupils, including those with physical disabilities, have full access to the curriculum. A recent emphasis on opportunities for investigations has successfully raised standards in science and mathematics. For example, Year 5 pupils were able to design and make ski lifts that had to run at different speeds. Some pupils considered using gears, others thought about varying the battery current or changing the wiring of the circuit to achieve this outcome. This activity was part of a much larger project, which included aspects of geography and literacy as part of a thematic approach to creative learning. The school acknowledges their good start at making links between the different areas of learning but recognises that more development is needed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is outstanding because the ethos of the school values individuals and fosters excellent relationships. Adults put the well-being of pupils first and manage lessons and playtimes with friendliness, sensitivity and humour. The school is a harmonious and happy environment where pupils feel happy and safe; where there are adults they can go to if they have problems. The school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding children. Academic guidance is good overall. Target setting is helping pupils understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work. However, this is not yet effective in all subjects. Arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs and pupils with behaviour difficulties are generally good so they receive good support in the classroom and achieve well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Clear vision and high aspirations have resulted in a professional and reflective culture, where staff share a common purpose and make an effective contribution to achieving the school's aims. The governing body is effective and ensures the school meets its statutory responsibilities. The school monitors its work thoroughly and has an accurate understanding of its main strengths and relative weaknesses. The school has been through a period of considerable innovation in terms of both the curriculum and its management. Managers have generated substantial amounts of information to analyse its performance and set targets. However, it does not yet make the fullest use of this information so that it can measure easily the impact of these curriculum innovations in terms of improved performance.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	1

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?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

10 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lambs Lane Primary School, Reading, RG7 1JB

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you about what you do and looking at your work. I am writing to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. We feel that you go to a good school.

We were very much impressed with your friendliness and your extremely sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other. We especially liked the way you all played together and included everyone, for example those of you with physical disabilities, in these activities. You listen very carefully to what your teachers have to say and learn a lot in lessons. As you say, your teachers make learning interesting and fun and there are many exciting things to do. We particularly liked the impressive artwork you displayed around the school for us to enjoy.

Your good school prepares you well for the next stage of your learning. To make it even better, we are asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities to learn independently and explore your own ideas in lessons. You told us that you enjoy working in this way and that it really makes you think. Your teachers want to make your school better in every way. We are asking them to look at different ways of measuring their success at achieving this. We are sure you will help them. In return, we want you to continue to listen to what your teachers have to say and work hard to meet the targets set for you. We hope that you have great success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Earish

Lead Inspector