

St Luke's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109970
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	310159
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Alan Jarvis

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	220
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Wastell
Headteacher	Mrs Pat Burke
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cookham Road Maidenhead SL6 7EG
Telephone number	01628 621 600
Fax number	01628 676 076

Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves a culturally diverse area of Maidenhead. About two fifths of pupils are from White British backgrounds and a similar proportion are from Pakistani heritage. Many are at an early stage of learning to speak English when they start school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than that found nationally. They have a wide range of needs, but moderate learning, and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties predominate. Children enter the Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the term after their fifth birthday. This means that most have one or two terms in the Reception class, but a few join at the start of Year 1. Most teachers have been appointed within the last two years. The headteacher took up her post in September 2008.

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 currently provides a satisfactory standard of education.

The clear message coming from parents is that they are impressed by how well pupils from different backgrounds work and play together, and by the caring and supportive ethos and the many improvements that they have seen in recent years. Good partnerships with parents and the local community, and with local agencies and organisations, provide benefits for pupils' learning and effectively contribute to community cohesion.

Good governance and an effective senior leadership team have successfully steered the school through a period in which there were staffing difficulties, management systems were found wanting, and many pupils were not achieving as well as they should. Good leadership and management have now successfully addressed these shortcomings. Staffing is more stable now. Recent teaching appointments have strengthened provision, and staff work well as a team alongside more experienced senior managers. Effective systems are now in place to track pupils' progress and closely monitor the school's performance, and good mentoring helps to develop the skills of staff.

Pupils are making better progress than they were, because of improvements made to teaching and the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2, where pupils have had more settled teaching, they achieve well. Standards are rising and are currently below average. Pupils in later years have had a more mixed quality of education and have had to make up much lost ground. Against this backdrop, standards have also been improving and were below average in 2007. They have risen further this year and the school's data clearly show they have made satisfactory achievement from Years 3 to 6. Progress in reading is particularly strong and standards at the end of Year 6 are average. Although there are clear signs of an improvement in standards and progress in writing and mathematics, the school rightly recognises that they need to be higher still, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is consistently good in Years 1 and 2. Good monitoring by the senior leadership team and subject leaders, together with coaching by mentors, is increasing the amount of good teaching in Years 3 to 6. However, the good information teachers have on pupils' achievements and progress is not always used as sharply as it might be to ensure that activities are challenging enough.

Leaders and managers have also extensively reviewed and improved the curriculum. Staff have been particularly successful in engaging pupils, and capitalising on their interests and creativity, through good use of topic work and beneficial links between subjects. This adds greatly to their enjoyment of school. Pupils also benefit from a good range of visits, and visitors to school, which support their good personal development, and give them a good sense of the varied community in which they live. Planning in English, mathematics and science has been adapted to better meet the needs of the different groups within the classes. However, more needs to be done to refine the curriculum in writing and mathematics so that it is always well matched to pupils' learning needs and enables them to work at a brisk rate.

Pupils are very happy in school. Behaviour, which was previously of some concern to parents, is now good. They particularly like the good range of clubs on offer such as the splendid gardening club and choir. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with cultural development being a particular strength. They are particularly knowledgeable about how to keep safe and free from harm. This is because staff help them to consider how they would

respond to potential instances of danger. This is helped by imaginative assemblies, visitors from different cultures, and visits to local places of worship. Singing, with hand actions in assemblies, is a delightful experience. Their good behaviour, awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles, and good attitudes to learning are helping them build on their achievements, although their current standards and progress satisfactorily prepare them for secondary school. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. There are very good systems to track their performance, which are used to identify any underachievement and provide the necessary support. Good marking and clear targets to aim for ensure pupils have a clear idea of what they must do to improve.

Parents rightly recognise the school's good leadership, its growing reputation and the pattern of rising standards. All staff are involved in helping the school diagnose strengths and identify where improvements are needed. There are many examples of subject leaders having a good impact on provision and progress, but some less-experienced subject leaders need further support to ensure they are fully effective. The good record of improvement reflects a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision for the EYFS is good. From previous information on children's progress, it is clear that they achieve well from a relatively low level of skills and abilities. Children's personal development and well-being are well supported, as can be seen by the confident way the children in Year 1 behave, having had a good start in Reception. Their skills on entry to Year 1 are below what is expected for this age group, particularly in language, writing and mathematical skills, but they have achieved well in the Reception year, given their starting points. Children's welfare is of paramount importance within the school. Provision for the EYFS has been well planned to reflect the new curriculum for young children. Leadership and management are good, and there is a clear view of what needs to be done to improve, such as further developing the outdoor area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics to the same level as those in reading, by effectively tailoring the curriculum to match pupils' levels of development.
- Sharpen teaching to ensure tasks are consistently well matched to pupils' needs.
- Enable those subject coordinators who are new to their role to have a sustained impact on provision and standards.

A small proportion of the 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

From a well below average starting point, most pupils now make the expected progress and meet their challenging targets. Standards are rising because of the rigorous approach to tracking pupils' progress, improved teaching and a secure curriculum. Pupils make good progress in reading throughout the school because of the strong reading programmes and the effective impact of additional intervention programmes to boost pupils' learning. A focus on 'juicy words and fab phrases' has recently helped to boost progress in writing. More opportunities for

developing writing in depth across the curriculum are being introduced. However, it is too soon to see the impact of these initiatives. Better coverage of the curriculum has ensured all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics. Further steps are now being taken to boost progress by ensuring that activities are better tailored to the needs of individual pupils. Those pupils who need additional support for a range of reasons are achieving as well as other groups over time. This is because of the improved, individualised support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils typically say, 'I like coming to this school because it is a lovely place to be'. They can explain clearly why it is important that their ideas about the diversity of cultures, backgrounds and beliefs in modern day society are extended. This is shown in how very well they understand other people's lives and beliefs, and show tolerance and respect for each other and for visitors. Behaviour is good because pupils know how to deal with any incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Most pupils attend regularly. They eagerly seek a certificate for good attendance. However, attendance rates are average, and are limited by a few parents taking their children on holiday during term time. The school diligently pursues any unexplained absence. Pupils also know that any concerns or worries they might have can be shared either by posting 'a prayer note' or by asking for help from an adult. Pupils can explain well how to promote and sustain a healthy lifestyle. They are exceptionally clear about what steps to take to keep themselves safe and free from harm, such as how to deal with safety around the perimeter or outside school. The pupils make a positive contribution to the school community by acting as playground leaders and school councillors, and taking on different duties and responsibilities within the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A more stable staffing situation, coupled with teachers receiving good advice on how to improve, is leading to more good teaching across the school. Lessons are well planned and teachers are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour and ensuring pupils are clear what they have to do and achieve in lessons. However, the school is aware that teachers need to use the good information they have on pupils more effectively to consistently tailor the work and pitch it at the right level to ensure that all pupils are absolutely clear about their next steps in learning. This is not the case in some lessons and, as a result, some pupils do not progress as quickly as they might. For example, in mathematics one girl said that 'Mathematics is tricky for me but my teacher helps me when I get stuck. I think this is because the work is sometimes a little too hard for me.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils gain a lot from the good variety of visits and clubs on offer. For example, the exercise when doing 'wake up and shake up', the musical activities such as the choir and recorder groups, and the very successful environmental club for the younger pupils. Topics such as 'The Shakespeare project' have brought together history, literacy and design technology, and helped develop pupils' creative and independent working skills. These, and the good provision for the

pupils' personal, social and health education, effectively promote pupils' personal development. While planning has improved in literacy, numeracy and science, and made provision secure, the school acknowledges that there is scope to tailor activities so that they effectively challenge all groups of pupils and enable more to make good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Incidents of disruptive behaviour have fallen rapidly because of better behaviour management. Pupils who make good choices when dealing with difficult situations are celebrated as 'Stars of the week'. Rigorous checks safeguard pupils' health and safety at all times. Outside agencies and a good range of intervention programmes are used well to support pupils who are learning English or have a learning difficulty. These help them to gain confidence, be included in that all the school offers, and make good progress in their personal development. Pupils are very aware of the academic targets and use them well to improve their learning. They say, 'We like the comments teachers make in our books as they give us a clear idea of how well we have done and where we can get better.' An effective programme of 'family learning' courses helps parents support their children at home. Many are generous with their support, for example in creating St Luke's Family Cookbook to raise awareness of healthy eating.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher is sustaining the drive for improvement, and capitalising on the continuity provided by the very able deputy headteacher and the good teamwork shown by all staff. This is building on the recent good improvements in teaching, behaviour management, the curriculum, and monitoring of provision that have been instrumental in addressing underachievement and improving pupils' progress. Leadership and management in key areas such as English, mathematics and science, and for pupils with additional needs, are already having a good impact in improving pupils' progress. However, the school is right in its view that some less-experienced subject managers need further support to ensure that their work is rigorous and brings about further improvements. The challenging targets that the school sets are being used effectively to quicken progress and reduce gaps in attainment. The school development plan includes well-chosen initiatives to sustain developments. Governors provide good challenge, committees work very well, and their good management of the budget has improved staffing and accommodation.

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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

03 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Luke's CofE Primary School, Maidenhead, SL6 7EG

Thank you for making my colleague and me feel so welcome when we visited your school, and telling us about the many things you enjoy. We particularly liked your singing with hand actions in assemblies, and visiting your exciting 'gardening club'. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. There are clear signs of improvement!

Here are some of the really good things about your school.

- The progress you make in your reading is particularly good.
- Many more of you are making better progress than was the case in the past.
- You are happy in school and like making friends with children from other countries and backgrounds. This helps you realise the importance of being tolerant and understanding people who live lives different from your own.
- You benefit from a good range of clubs and stimulating topic work.
- Good links exist with your parents, the local community and support agencies, that help you develop well as individuals and in your learning.
- Teaching is much better this year and we can see that it is improving.
- You behave well and know exactly what to do when faced with danger.
- You know your targets well and use them to improve your work.
- The adults care for you well and make sure you are happy and safe at all times.
- Your senior leaders and governors are doing a particularly good job.

We have asked your teachers to help to make the school even better by helping you to improve and develop your writing and mathematics. We would like your teachers to further improve your learning and help you make faster progress by giving you work that matches your needs. We have also asked the teachers who have just taken over a subject to make sure that they help other teachers to ensure you make good progress. You can help by focusing on your writing and mathematics and being clear about your next steps in learning. We hope that you will always enjoy school as much as you do now, and that you will strive to do as well as you can in the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Alan Jarvis

Lead Inspector