

Lapford Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113182
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311142
Inspection date	23 September 2008
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	83
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	Ian Luxmoore
Headteacher	Elizabeth Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Eastington Road Lapford Crediton EX17 6QE
Telephone number	01363 83292
Fax number	01363 83750

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

The impact leaders have on areas for development, particularly in mathematics and writing,

How well pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are managed and supported to make good progress,

How well the curriculum, guidance and support helps pupils to improve their work, particularly in mathematics and writing.

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents, and by speaking with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Lapford is a smaller than average rural primary school. The number of minority ethnic pupils is low and all pupils have English as their first language. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision (EYFS). There is also pre-school provision on-site that is not managed by the governing body.

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 a satisfactory school. Children start with skills that are broadly in line with expectations for their age. Their progress is good because new initiatives have improved their skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. During Years 1–6, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, there is a marked disparity in the progress pupils make in literacy and numeracy. Nonetheless, standards are broadly average. In literacy, pupils make good progress in reading throughout the school so that standards are above average by the time they leave. Leaders have rightly identified writing as an issue and, over the last two years, have put time and resources into improving their skills by ensuring that writing had a purpose. To do this, they have reorganised the curriculum so that pupils are enthused and engaged by stimulating topics that link successfully with other curricular subjects. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a particular strength and is used well through the curriculum. Pupils have enjoyed practising their writing skills within this context and as a result, they are now making better progress. The marking of writing helps pupils to know how to improve. Given these successful actions, leaders have a satisfactory capacity to bring about improvement in the school.

The development of numeracy is less secure and pupils generally make only satisfactory progress. Although the teaching of literacy is good, pupils are not given the same support in numeracy, resulting in teaching that is only satisfactory overall. Pupils are not always given work that is appropriate for their abilities and this hampers their progress. Work is marked and pupils are made aware of how well they have done although guidance on how to improve is not consistent. Although leaders have more recently identified the development of numeracy as an area for improvement, less progress has been made because the school has experienced staffing difficulties. This has particularly impacted on the development of numeracy in the school. Initiatives have not been able to be consistently managed in order to bring about effective improvement. However, these issues have now been resolved and there are well-focused plans to improve numeracy during the current year. Although the curriculum is now good overall, there are not enough links to support pupils in practising their mathematical skills.

The enriched curriculum includes a good number of trips out and specialist visitors to the school to support pupils' learning. A link has been established with a school in Gambia to explore a shared global curriculum. There are a number of extra-curricular activities that are supported by many and pupils say how much they enjoy these opportunities. The school is keen to improve the curriculum by developing the outdoor provision that will enable effective learning to take place.

Child protection and safeguarding arrangements are robust and pupils are very well cared for. Pupils' good personal development and well-being are due to the good provision in the enriched curriculum. Behaviour is good and pupils are eager to learn. As a result they really enjoy school, feel very safe and their attendance is good. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay healthy. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although the school is continuing to find new ways to enhance their understanding of multi-cultural Britain to improve their community cohesion. Nevertheless, they already make a good contribution to the community through a wide range of fundraising initiatives that support both local and international charities. Pupils are being satisfactorily prepared for their future economic well-being.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early. Where pupils need extra support, the school is proactive in seeking the help of outside agencies such as the educational psychologist and the school nurse. However, the teaching assistants are not deployed effectively to meet the needs of these pupils successfully and this results in the pupils making satisfactory progress overall. Although all pupils have literacy and numeracy targets, those set for pupils with learning difficulties are sometimes too vague and make it difficult for the school to assess how effectively they are being supported. There are plans for training and support this year to improve the leadership and management in this area, which is currently underdeveloped.

Although leadership and management are currently satisfactory, they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and clear plans for improvement. They are well supported by active governors who frequently visit the school and help in many practical ways, including the development of the building. Their knowledge of the school's priorities is secure, although the effectiveness of actions to support these is not sufficiently analysed. Although a very small minority of parents feel that their views and concerns are not considered, the vast majority expressed the view that staff are approachable and supportive. Parents also have very positive views about the school's happy atmosphere where pupils can enjoy their education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the vast majority having attended the pre-school provision on site. They arrive with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with expectations for their age and settle well into the routine of school life. This is because there is a good induction programme to support them prior to starting school. There are good relationships with parents, who rightly feel confident in the school's ability to care for their children. During the EYFS, children make good progress in most areas. This is due to a number of recent initiatives that have improved their language and mathematical development. Due to the small numbers involved, different cohorts exhibit a variety of strengths and weaknesses and the EYFS teacher monitors these carefully. All six areas of learning are well planned with appropriate activities to support their learning. However, not all of these are evident in the outdoor environment, which needs improvement. Children enjoy their learning because good procedures ensure that their welfare is secure. The EYFS is well managed and led, ensuring that children enter Year 1 with above average standards, ready to build on their existing knowledge.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the teaching of mathematics to ensure that pupils of all abilities make good progress.
- Develop the managerial role of the SEN coordinator to improve provision and increase the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Develop the outdoor provision to enable more effective learning opportunities, including in the EYFS.

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.

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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?	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	3

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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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?	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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lapford Community Primary School, Crediton EX17 6QE

Thank you for the warm welcome we received when we visited your school earlier this week. We enjoyed meeting you all and finding out about your school. We found out that you go to a satisfactory school, which means that it does some things well, but could improve aspects of its work.

You told us that you enjoyed school and we can easily see why. Your teachers enjoy teaching you and plan exciting lessons to help you to learn. You are very lucky to have such a lot of lovely resources such as the ICT suite and the spacious hall. You also told us that you feel safe because your teachers look after you well. We agree with you. You behave well and the school is proud of you. We have been very impressed with your reading skills and pleased that your skills in writing are improving too.

We have asked your school to give you more help in mathematics by ensuring that the work you are given is at the right level for you. We want you to practise your mathematical skills in your topic work so that you can make better progress. We have also asked the school to give better support to those of you who find lessons difficult. Finally, your school will be thinking of how best to use your lovely grounds to support your learning. Maybe you could help by suggesting some good ideas!

Thank you for a lovely day. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Mr D Shears Lead Inspector