

# Lady Seaward's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 113428          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Devon           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 311263          |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 10 October 2007 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Janet Simms     |

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                                    | 60                                   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                   |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mandy Cyprus-Slater                  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Diane Boyden                         |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 2 December 2002                      |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Clyst St George<br>Exeter<br>EX3 0RE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01392 873629                         |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01392 875580                         |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This very small primary school serves a village to the south of Exeter and its surrounding area. There are three mixed age classes – Reception and Year 1, Years 2 and 3 with some 4, and the remainder of Year 4 with Years 5 and 6. Numbers attending the school dropped following a period of instability. Since the promotion of a senior teacher to acting headteacher last year, the school's popularity has improved and numbers are increasing steadily. The school has an award for Physical Education, Daily Physical Activity and School Sports.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some good features. After a prolonged period of difficulties, parents and others value the improvements brought about by the acting headteacher and her staff. The school has used its partners and local education advisors effectively, developing new systems and procedures to promote more consistency in its provision. The school has a sound understanding of its strengths and areas requiring further development. Although the issues identified at the time of the last inspection have only recently been rectified, improvement since then is satisfactory. Following parental concerns, some pupils left the school but the school's increasing popularity reflects the improvements that have been made. The school demonstrates that it has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Despite previous instabilities within the leadership and management of the school, pupils have continued to make satisfactory progress. This is because committed staff have placed the pupils' personal and academic well-being at the heart of their thinking. However, until recently they lacked clear information about pupils' standards or rates of progress. Staff could not easily spot when pupils were falling behind and lacked guidance about when and how to intervene. Secure tracking of progress now identifies any such lapses and rectifies them, so the rate of pupils' progress is increasing and is more consistent. Several are now progressing faster than expected. Pupils achieve well in Reception and standards throughout the school are rising. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach the above average standards expected from their levels when they were age seven. Other years, including Year 2, are on track to meet or exceed targets.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school and is greatly valued by parents. Pupils are pleasant and friendly, talking confidently about aspects of school life. They discuss recent changes maturely, for example, recognising and explaining improvements in behaviour. However, older pupils do not contribute enough to moving their own learning forward because the school's target-setting systems are so new.

Teachers organise the curriculum skilfully to match the diverse needs of different ages and abilities in classes. However, planning lacks enough cross-curricular links, so improvement in weaker aspects, such as pupils' use of subject vocabulary in science, is very recent. Very strong pastoral care is now supplemented by better academic guidance about learning, although this remains an area to strengthen through better marking.

Although leadership and management are satisfactory, an unusually high proportion of parents and others are concerned about the temporary nature of current arrangements. One parent summarised the views of many by commenting '.. this really needs to be sorted out ASAP ..'. Clear improvements are starting to result from recent actions and pupils are very pleased with these. However, the full impact is not fully reflected in pupils' achievement and many parents remain unsettled by the present insecurity.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well led. Teaching is good so children settle quickly into routines and make good progress in all areas of learning. Standards were above expectations in summer 2007, with most children exceeding the expected learning goals for their age. Children share a class with Year 1 pupils, but careful planning and effective deployment of the teaching assistant ensure they receive good levels of individual attention. The covered outdoor area is

used well to ensure that these young children have a balanced programme of independent play and activities where they are supported by adults. The close proximity of the pre-school groups contributes to a smooth transition into the Reception class.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Clarify the current uncertainty about the school's future by securing permanence in its leadership and management.
- Ensure that recently implemented systems of monitoring and evaluation, particularly of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, result in improved achievement for all pupils.
- Strengthen pupils' understanding of their own learning so that they become more involved in achieving their targets.

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**

Standards on entry match those found nationally. Pupils make good progress in Reception, usually entering Year 1 above average in key areas of learning. Some underachievement across Years 1 and 2 has been halted and pupils are now progressing at a faster rate. Until recently, staff lacked tracking information to ensure pupils were progressing satisfactorily. They now use new systems properly, supporting and challenging pupils to ensure they make at least the progress expected. The result is that several pupils in all years are now exceeding expectations. Although standards vary year on year, pupils at Year 6 in 2006 and 2007 progressed as expected and standards were average. The majority of pupils in the current Years 5 and 6 are beginning to achieve well and standards are above average.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils express positive views of the school and enjoy being there. They feel safe and know that their concerns are listened to. They show strong respect for the opinions of others, which results from a good personal, social and health education programme. A keen sense of right and wrong and an awareness of world issues motivate pupils to raise money for a wide range of charities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand cultural diversity increasingly well because the school is making better links, which compensate for their inexperience of living in a more mixed community. Good links with the church contribute strongly to spiritual development and pupils' sense of their closer community. Pupils' sound basic skills and positive attitudes prepare them satisfactorily for their future lives.

The 'Family Groups' system contributes well to developing responsibility amongst older pupils, who support younger ones and those new to the school well. Some parents had concerns about behaviour, but this has improved and is good in lessons and at playtimes. Pupils know how to use equipment responsibly for healthy exercise and enjoy the wide range of sports available. The healthy lunches have a good uptake because pupils understand the importance of eating a balanced diet. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Throughout the school, teachers promote warm relationships and manage behaviour effectively. They are well organised and plan their work effectively for the different needs within their classes. Use of the new interactive whiteboards creates interest and engagement. Teachers know pupils well and make lessons interesting and challenging. These factors contribute to pupils' positive response, their increasingly good progress and their enjoyment of learning. Good, recently introduced assessment procedures in English and mathematics enable teachers to track pupils' progress well and standards are beginning to rise. However, teachers have only just started to involve pupils more actively in improving their own learning through marking and setting targets for improvement. Staff are fully aware that this needs developing further.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Recent initiatives to broaden the curriculum have contributed to improving progress in some subject areas. For example, a greater emphasis has been placed on developing key vocabulary such as that used in science. The curriculum for science and mathematics now includes much more investigative work. However, the school is fully aware that it needs to make more cross-curricular links so that learning is more integrated, purposeful and enjoyable.

Pupils are particularly enthused by the range of clubs on offer, by visits they make, for instance to the theatre and the local church, and by visitors such as their regular sports coaches. Planned personal and social programmes, including residential visits, very successfully promote pupils' understanding of being healthy and safe as well as developing self-confidence and responsibility.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. All are warmly included in this small 'family' community, where adults know pupils well and are attentive to their concerns. Pupils are confident that they will receive help if they need it. The school is a safe and secure place which works well with parents and other agencies to meet the needs of its pupils increasingly effectively. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have action plans which are properly tailored to their needs.

Recent improvements in assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are beginning to impact positively on standards. Pupils know their targets in English and mathematics and are beginning to understand how they can improve their work. However, as they get older, pupils do not yet become as involved as expected in assessing their own progress towards these.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 3**

Many good innovations promoted by the acting headteacher, her staff and advisors have started to move the school forward after a period of concern which initiated successful interventions from the local authority. However, as current management is temporary, there is an urgent

need to secure the school's position through permanent leadership. Subject leadership is strengthening and staff recognise the continuing need to develop their monitoring roles so that good practice is shared through the school.

Recent changes in the governing body have resulted in a stronger team that supports and challenges management. Governors now have a clear, realistic view of the school and are becoming instrumental in moving it forward. Targets are suitably challenging and are starting to raise standards.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 3   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 3 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?                                  | 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 |
| How well 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 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?   | 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>                                       | 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 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?  | 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**

11 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lady Seaward's Church of England Primary School, Clyst St George, Exeter, EX3 0RE

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your school life.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. The youngest children get off to a good start because the provision for them is of high quality. Year 6 pupils are working at an above average level in their work and satisfactory progress is made throughout the school. Teaching is sound and you like the work that you do, particularly when you are involved in practical activities.

We were impressed with your good behaviour and it was clear that you really enjoy the 'family groups' where the older pupils look after the younger ones very well. We thought you had good knowledge about keeping fit and healthy. You feel safe because the school looks after you well and there is always someone you can talk to about a problem.

Your acting headteacher and staff are keen to work together to give you the best education. Although things have improved for you recently, we agree with your parents that the school needs a permanent headteacher. We have asked if this can happen as soon as possible. We have asked your school to make sure that they use the information they gather on the work you do to check that you are all making sufficient progress. We have also asked your school to involve you more in setting the next step forward in your learning.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Lady Seaward's Church of England Primary School gets better and better.

With best wishes

Janet Simms Lead inspector

11 October 2007

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Lead inspector