

Langenhoe Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114729
Local Authority	ESSEX LA
Inspection number	311680
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2007
Reporting inspector	David Wynford-Jones

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	128
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Melanie Vine
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2005
School address	Bracken Way Abberton Colchester CO5 7PG
Telephone number	01206 735267
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. The home circumstances of the pupils vary, but overall they are generally more favourable than average. Few pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportions of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities are much lower than usual. Very few pupils speak English as a second language the proportion coming from minority ethnic groups are well below national averages.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Parents and pupils value the efforts of the staff. One parent wrote 'We feel the teachers and the headteacher work very hard to get the best out of our children'. Several pupils when asked 'What is the best thing about Langenhoe School?' answered 'the teaching is really good and you learn a lot'.

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards in the current Years 2, 5 and 6 are above expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. The vast majority of pupils in all classes are making good progress because the teaching is good, they have a positive attitude to school and enjoy learning. However, standards in writing throughout the school could be higher and too few of the more able pupils are on track to attain Level 3 in science by the end of Year 2. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because their needs are identified early and they receive good and well-targeted support.

The good level of care, guidance and support ensures pupils feel safe. All health and safety procedures are well established. Procedures for ensuring the school meets the latest government requirements on safeguarding are in place. Assessment procedures and the use of the information to challenge and support pupils is good. Pupils are clear about their targets for improvement, particularly in English.

The curriculum is good. Teachers have reviewed the approach to teaching the curriculum to ensure pupils acquire key learning skills. These changes need to be consolidated and integrated more fully into curriculum planning. A reasonable range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school enriches the well-organised curriculum and promotes pupils' personal development effectively. They have an excellent understanding of healthy living and staying safe. Their contribution to the community is good. The vast majority behave well, although there are a few pupils whose behaviour, at times, is not appropriate. Overall, their personal development is good.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and other leaders work together well. Co-ordinators have a good overview of the strengths and areas for development. Governors are supportive and play an effective role in the life of the school. The school development plan is comprehensive and correctly identifies the areas for development and actions to be taken. However, the criteria for measuring its success lack clarity. As a result, the impact of some actions can be difficult to evaluate accurately. Nevertheless, the school has continued to make progress since its last inspection in 2005 when it was removed from special measures. It provides good value for money and has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly average but varies from year-to-year because of the small numbers of children entering school. However, many children enter school with standards lower than those expected in their social, speech, language and communication development. Satisfactory admission arrangements and good progress in children's personal, social and emotional development ensure children settle quickly and become happy and confident learners. The teacher and support staff work together well to ensure the children's progress is monitored carefully and activities are well planned to promote their learning and encourage independence. Effective use is made of the indoor areas to ensure the children are

offered a curriculum that is well matched to their needs. Opportunities for outdoor activities are restricted by the limited space and the lack of shelter. This impedes the children's creativity and understanding of healthy living. However, good use is made of the main playground to promote the children's physical development when older pupils are not using it. By the end of the Reception class, the majority of the children are working at or above the expected levels in all areas of learning with the exception of communication, language and literacy. Their achievement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and pupils' achievement in writing.
- Ensure more pupils attain Level 3 in science by the end of Year 2.
- Integrate the learning skills based approach more fully into the curriculum planning.
- Refine the school improvement plan to include precise measures by which it can be evaluated.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards throughout the school are rising. The majority of pupils are working at levels above those expected nationally. Their progress is good. However, pupils need to continue to improve the content of their writing and further develop their use and understanding of mathematical and scientific vocabulary. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were broadly in line with the national average. However, the result masks that approximately a quarter of the pupils were identified as having learning difficulties. Overall, the pupils made satisfactory progress from the end of Year 2. Their progress was particularly rapid in Years 5 and 6. This is because teaching was more effective and better use was made of assessment information to raise expectations and target support. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2007 were similar to the national average in reading and writing and above in mathematics. Good teaching and effective use of assessment information are having a positive impact on pupils' learning in all classes. Pupils in the current Years 5 and 6 are well placed to attain standards above those expected by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages show respect and care towards each other. They undertake their responsibilities seriously. Older pupils take pride in being table monitors at lunch times. They enjoy being members of the school council and want to arrange a talent competition to raise funds for the school. Pupils have a good understanding of their contribution to school life but it is less well developed for local, national and international communities. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating and taking regular physical exercise. They organise games in the playground and have an excellent understanding of safety matters. Pupils enjoy school. Their attendance is above the national average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. However their awareness of other cultures is not sufficiently well developed. The pupils' good social skills, their achievement in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), and effective transition arrangements ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers are successful in effectively promoting pupils' desire to learn. The vast majority of pupils listen carefully and work hard. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Key features of teaching are high expectations, effective use of questioning strategies, brisk pace and lively lessons. Teachers' use of the electronic white boards is good in some lessons. They are increasingly using them to enhance their teaching and promote pupils' enjoyment of learning. Teachers regularly assess the pupils' progress and actively encourage them to self-assess their own work. This information is being used well to plan subsequent lessons. However, in some lessons insufficient emphasis is being placed on consolidating and extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of subject-specific vocabulary. There are many good examples of marking, especially in English, and pupils are provided with clear guidance on the next steps for improvement. Teaching assistants provide valuable support and are deployed effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Careful thought has been given to the organisation of the curriculum to ensure there is a rolling programme of topics covering Years R–2 and Years 3–6. It is well matched to the needs of the pupils and contributes to the good progress they are making. Good links are made between subjects and information communication technology (ICT) is being used appropriately to support learning. Key learning skills including problem solving, thinking skills, communication, perseverance and self-assessment are in the process of being identified for each topic and subject but this is still at an early stage of development.

Theme weeks and visits, such as a recent one to Maldon, help to promote pupils' enjoyment of school and stimulate their enthusiasm. The school grounds are used well to develop pupils' understanding of healthy living; care for the environment, creative writing and aspects of the science curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff show a very strong commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. The good liaison between teachers and teaching assistants ensures pupils build on their previous learning, make good progress and reach challenging targets. Assessment procedures are thorough. The information is used effectively to track pupils' progress and to identify pupils who require additional support. Pupils know their targets in English but many are less certain about expectations in mathematics. Pupils feel safe and know what they should do if there are any difficulties. Health and safety requirements are met.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school operates well on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher shows good leadership in setting out a vision for the school and giving clear direction. Staff work well as a team and share her aspirations. All staff work enthusiastically to raise standards but the full impact has yet to be realised in the end of Year 6 national test results. Good systems are in place to check how well the school is doing and identify what it could do better. Subject leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning by monitoring lesson plans, conducting work scrutinies and analysing data, but they have few opportunities to observe lessons. Several governors frequently visit the school to monitor its progress. They have a clear understanding of the school's effectiveness. Links with parents are good. They work effectively with the school to raise additional funds to improve provision and the learning environment.

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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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well 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	2

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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

12 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langenhoe Primary School, Abberton, CO5 7PG

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit and talking to you. I was pleased that so many of you said you liked coming to school. I thought that your behaviour was good, you were friendly and polite. It was very nice to be able to stop and relax to watch the nativity performance. Well done to all those confident performers.

Your school is a good school and does many things well. The way the teachers and other adults look after you and guide you is good. They really want you to do as well as you can. Your personal development is good. I was impressed by your excellent knowledge of healthy living and staying safe. Teaching and the curriculum are good and so the standards you reach in reading, writing and mathematics are generally higher than those expected for pupils of your age. However, I think the standards you reach in your writing could still be higher. I also think that by the end of Year 2, some pupils could reach higher standards in science. To help you with this, I have asked your teachers to concentrate on improving your writing skills and your understanding of the work in science.

Your teachers have recently been looking at the way subjects are taught and how they can make certain you learn basic skills. Several pupils told me how much they enjoyed these lessons, so I have asked your teachers to carry on with this approach.

The governors and Mrs Vine know the school really well. They know all its strong points and where things need to improve. They have written a detailed development plan. I have suggested that they add a few sentences so that they will be able to judge when the actions have brought about the improvements.

I will always remember standing in your playground looking at the wooden sculptures, the woodland area and out across to Mersey Island. You really are lucky to be able to go to Langenhoe School.

I hope you will continue to do well and enjoy your time at the school.

With best wishes

David Wynford Jones Lead inspector