

Leverton Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115282
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	311899
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Sheelagh Barnes

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Kane
Headteacher	Mrs Louise Martin
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Honey Lane Waltham Abbey Essex EN9 3BE
Telephone number	01992 715885
Fax number	01992 651669

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups. Fewer pupils than nationally speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils who need extra support with their learning is also broadly average, and there are fewer pupils with a statement of special educational need than nationally. Attainment on entry is in line with that expected for pupils' ages, although there is some variation year-on-year. The school has been awarded with Healthy Schools, The Eco Award, Sports Mark, the Football Association Charter Award and Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for pupils. Senior leaders and governors have an accurate overall understanding of the school's strengths and the areas for improvement. Coordinators are developing monitoring skills, but the checks they make are not all in sufficient depth or rigorous enough to identify where there are inconsistencies in provision. Neither do they easily show how well particular groups of pupils are doing. Because of this, leadership and management is satisfactory. Improvements made since the last inspection show that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The school provides a satisfactory level of care, support and guidance for pupils overall. All requirements for keeping pupils safe and secure are met. A new system of guidance for pupils is starting to develop, whereby they are told what the next targets are for their learning in literacy. However, this is not yet consistently and regularly applied across the whole school. A major strength is in the quality of pastoral care that the school provides for pupils, which is good. As a result, pupils enjoy school and say they feel safe and happy. This results in their good personal development. Pupils' behaviour is good. They are well aware of how to keep themselves healthy, and their understanding of how to keep safe is good. They make a good contribution, to the school community through taking responsibilities, such as in the school council and a satisfactory and developing contribution to the wider community. Their satisfactory basic skills mean that they are being suitably prepared for their future lives.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who need extra help with their learning or those with English as an additional language are identified quickly and provided with appropriate support. Overall, steady progress is made throughout the school in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Recent work to improve reading skills has started to be successful and this is beginning to be evident in the better progress pupils are making. The school has identified the need to extend this push now to include developing pupils' skills in writing. Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, during the inspection a significant amount of good and, on occasion, outstanding teaching was observed. Teachers plan in detail to ensure parallel classes have the same opportunities. The planning benefits from a satisfactory curriculum. There is a good range of enrichment and extra curricular activities and a good range of clubs and out of school activities, which pupils enjoy. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to help pupils remember more about what they are learning. In too many lessons, however, the pace of learning is slower than it need be. On these occasions, all pupils are required to perform simple tasks before moving on to more challenging work. While this supports the learning of some, it can prevent others from reaching more advanced tasks in the time available. In addition, teachers do not always use their marking of work as well as they might to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' skills in writing in all subjects.
- Give pupils clearer information, through marking of work and other methods, about the small steps they need to take in each subject to attain higher standards.
- Ensure that more lessons move on at a brisk pace and that more pupils move quickly on to challenging tasks.

- Increase the monitoring role of subject leaders, so that they have a more accurate whole school picture of the standards individual pupils attain in their subject.

A small proportion of 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

Pupils start school with standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages, although standards in reading are stronger than in writing, mathematics and science. Due to the sound quality of the provision, boys and girls from Year 3 to Year 6 make steady gains in their learning and satisfactory progress towards meeting the challenging targets the school sets for them. Pupils who need extra help with their learning and those with English as an additional language are suitably supported so that they achieve satisfactorily in relation to their abilities. Reading standards have improved recently because a number of initiatives have placed a strong emphasis on this aspect of pupils' learning. Even though the school has identified that writing is an area that still requires improvement, standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is due, in the main, to caring staff and an appropriate personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are welcoming, friendly and polite. They are content, well-behaved learners who enjoy much of school life. This is reflected in the steady improvement in attendance over time, which is now average. Behaviour has improved markedly in the last twelve months due to new interventions including the issuing of red cards. Hence, pupils feel safe and secure in school, free from harassment. Pupils make a strong contribution to school life through the school council and their various duties such as bank clerks and assembly leaders. Although pupils respond well to consultation over broader school matters, their ability to evaluate their own work is under-developed. By Year 6, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives. The Healthy School award is testament to pupils' commitment to exercise and a balanced diet.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and appropriately high expectations of their behaviour and response. Planning is given suitable priority and teachers frequently plan together. Teachers explain at the start of lessons how pupils and staff are going to know if the learning has been successful. This is a new initiative and is generally effective. Teaching is appropriately matched to the needs of pupils from all groups, including those who need extra support with their learning and those with English as an additional language. However, at times the whole class proceeds from the same starting point, which slows the pace of learning for some pupils. Resources, such as interactive whiteboards, are used well to make learning interesting and exciting. Marking is generally regular and encouraging. However, it does not always give pupils

clear information of how to make their work even better. This is particularly the case in writing, especially when pupils write in subjects other than English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

ICT provision has been much improved. The ICT suite is an excellent facility and teachers make good use of laptops for planning and electronic whiteboards for teaching. A wide range of clubs for all ages from cricket to Spanish enriches the curriculum well. Assemblies are of good quality, often led by pupils. Good personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. On occasion, too long spent on a particular subject can reduce the time available for teaching basic skills. The headteacher and governors have identified the need to review the curriculum. This is in order to make better use of time for and to merge subjects to make learning more interesting and relevant for pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school's ethos is actively caring about pupils' welfare. The premises offer a safe environment for learning and staff provide good role models to pupils over inter-personal relationships. Robust policies and practices ensure that safeguarding of pupils meet requirements. Tracking of pupils' progress in basic skills is developing, but provides limited information for teachers in matching work to pupils' needs in some areas. Personal targets for pupils are used inconsistently and consequently they are not always clear about how to improve. Good monitoring procedures exist which help in promoting good attendance and ensuring that information about pupils' whereabouts is always clear. Holidays in term time are actively discouraged and parents receive clear information about each pupil's attendance record.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Routines and daily systems are well established and the school runs smoothly. The headteacher has a good overall knowledge of standards throughout the school and self-evaluation is accurate. Information gained is then used appropriately by the leadership team to focus priorities and improve standards. The school has correctly identified the major areas for improvement and these have already been built into the development plan. There is a good range of information about pupils' progress and tracking the progress of individuals and groups is improving, because of recent work in this area. As yet, there is too little accumulated data to accurately analyse trends class by class. Governors are supportive and take their responsibilities seriously. There has been a significant improvement to resources, in particular for ICT. The bright, spacious accommodation is a good environment for learning. Coordinators are hardworking and enthusiastic. However, they have not, as yet, fully developed their leadership roles to include rigorous monitoring. While many good policies have been produced, such as for marking, these are not always fully and consistently applied in daily practice.

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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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 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?	3

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?	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

9 May 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Leverton Junior School, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3BE

I am writing to thank you for the way you made us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We also want to thank all those of you we met in groups and talked to in the playground and at lunchtime. This was very helpful and it was lovely for us to hear about your work and how much you enjoy being at school. We want to share with you what we found out about your school.

Here are some of the good things about your school.

- You get on together well and your behaviour is good.
- You learn a lot about staying healthy and keeping safe.
- Your teachers look after you well.
- Teachers make good use of things such as videos and whiteboards to make lessons interesting.
- Teachers and governors have improved your school building so that you now have a lovely library and a well-equipped computer room to help you with your learning.
- Your attendance has improved and you are now coming regularly. Well done and keep this up!

There are some things that we have asked your headteacher and governors to do to make your school even better.

- Help you to do even better with your writing.
- Ask your teachers to give you more information, through their marking and talking to you, about how you are getting on and what you need to do to improve your work even more.
- Make sure that lessons are brisk and planned so that you can get on with things that challenge you more quickly, especially those of you who find learning easier.
- Ask teachers who are in charge of subjects to find out more about how well each of you are getting on, so that they can make sure you have everything you need to do your very best.

We know you can help in these things by continuing to come to school regularly and trying your hardest. We wish you well for the future.

Yours Sincerely

Sheelagh Barnes

Lead inspector