

# Lydbrook Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 115531           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Gloucestershire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 311964           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 8–9 July 2008    |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Linda McGill HMI |

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>                    | Community                           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11                                |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed                               |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |                                     |
| School                                    | 126                                 |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                  |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Lyn Walker                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Simon Lusted                        |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 16 September 2003                   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | School Road<br>Lydbrook<br>GL17 9PX |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01594 860344                        |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01594 860399                        |

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|--------------------------|---------------|
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| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 8–9 July 2008 |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Lydbrook is a small primary school that serves the village of the same name. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage, but a small number are of Eastern European origin and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is broadly average, as is the proportion who have learning difficulties, in the main with speech and language. A higher than average proportion has a formal statement of special educational needs. The school's population is relatively stable, but the low numbers in some year groups mean that a few pupils join the school at different times throughout the school year. The school has had Investors in People status for some time. It also has 'Healthy School' status and the 'Activemark' award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school's overall effectiveness is good. Pupils and their families both think very highly of the school. One parent echoed the response of several others when she wrote, 'Lydbrook is a happy and inviting school that is at the heart of the local community.' One of the members of the school council said, 'Everyone is special here, in their own way.' Their views accurately sum up some of Lydbrook's important strengths.

Under the strong direction of the headteacher, the school has made good strides forward since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further. There has been a substantial improvement in the school's systems for assessing attainment and tracking pupils' progress. Teachers use the detailed information to identify next steps for their teaching and the pupils' learning. This means that the pupils are making good progress. There is a clear focus on helping every child achieve to the best of their ability, balanced with a deep concern for their welfare and their personal development and well-being. Excellent partnerships with local schools and other agencies make a strong contribution to the support provided for pupils and to the development of good practice.

About half of the pupils start school with the skills and knowledge that are expected for their age group. Others have weaker skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. They make good progress in the Reception Year, which is sustained across the rest of the school. The pupils' achievement is good, because by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. For example, the pupils reach very high standards in reading. Efforts this year to raise standards in writing have met with success and a greater proportion of pupils have attained levels that are higher than expected for their age.

Teaching is good. Tasks and activities are well matched to the pupils' learning needs. Classrooms are inviting and stimulating, and attractive displays celebrate what pupils have achieved across a wide range of subjects. There is a purposeful 'buzz' in lessons. The best lessons challenge the pupils to think, explain and develop their reasoning. There are good opportunities for pupils to work independently or in cooperation with others. Occasionally, teachers miss the chance to check that everyone is fully involved in the work and understands it before moving on to the next part of the lesson. Relationships between staff and pupils are mutually respectful and warm. The pupils are proud of their work and talk enthusiastically about what they are doing. Their positive attitudes and desire to learn make a good contribution to their success.

Pupils' personal development is good. The pupils are polite, friendly and self-assured. They behave very well indeed, and show great care and consideration for one another. Their commitment to healthy lifestyles is outstanding, helped in no small part by the strong emphasis the school places on healthy eating and sporting activities. Regular 'Wake and Shake' sessions, led by parents, are very popular. The pupils' outstanding contribution to the school and the local and global communities is reflected clearly in the many displays in public areas of the school.

There is a wide range of activities before and after school, which both pupils and parents appreciate. These activities enhance the curriculum, as do educational visits and the good use that is made of the school's attractive grounds.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. By the time they start Year 1, standards are broadly average. This means that the children have made good progress during their first year in school. The staff know the children well and track their learning closely. They tailor activities to the children's needs and interests. The children are keen to learn and their personal, social and emotional development is good. In particular, they are confident to choose activities for themselves as well as being keen participants in activities led by adults. All of this stands them in good stead as they move into Year 1. The lack of ready access to outdoors means that the children do not have a good balance of indoor and outdoor learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- 
- Give the Foundation Stage pupils plenty of opportunities to learn outdoors as well as in the classroom.
- Ensure that teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons more regularly before moving on.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The pupils build well on their good start in the Foundation Stage, and by the time they reach Year 6, standards are above average. At Key Stage 1, standards have risen steadily over the past three years and are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who have reached the higher Level 3 in writing this year has increased substantially. Standards have also risen in Key Stage 2. The unconfirmed results of the recent national tests show that almost all of the 14 pupils have reached the higher Level 5 in reading. Similarly, everyone has reached the expected level in mathematics and nearly all have done so in science. The marking of the writing tests is incomplete, but the teacher's assessments show that almost all of the pupils have reached the expected Level 4, and many have exceeded it. Across the school, pupils who find learning difficult make good progress in line with their classmates.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

A striking feature of the pupils' personal development and well-being is the outstanding commitment they have to healthy lifestyles. Almost all pupils participate in sport, and they thoroughly enjoy physical activity. They, and many parents, enjoy growing, cooking and eating produce from the school's garden. The pupils' contribution to the school and to the local and global communities is excellent. The pupils raise substantial amounts for charities and are keen to help those less fortunate than themselves. Members of the school council take their roles seriously, and are proud to represent their classmates. They are pleased to be listened to and know their views will be taken seriously. Pupils enjoy school and learning a good deal; indeed, they could not think of anything that they would change. Their attendance is satisfactory. Behaviour is consistently good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and their understanding of their own and other cultures is a particularly strong feature. Older pupils are playground 'buddies' and help to keep everyone safe at break and lunch times. The pupils' good academic achievement and their growing ability to cooperate well in teams mean that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education and later life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good teaching enables the pupils to make good progress. The teachers know their pupils very well, in terms of both the levels they have reached in their learning and their personal qualities. This helps staff to plan and teach activities that are appropriately matched to what pupils need to know next and which suit their styles of learning. In the best lessons, the teachers establish a purposeful working atmosphere and make sure that everyone is fully involved throughout. The teachers also give the pupils time to think and to explain their thinking to others. There is a crisp pace, and the carefully staged activities build well on what the pupils already know. Not all of the staff are equally skilled at this, and opportunities are sometimes missed to check that everyone is keeping up. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils who find learning difficult, which also helps them to make good progress. The pupils themselves make a strong contribution to their own learning. As they move up through the school, they develop inquiring minds and positive attitudes, and see themselves as successful learners.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum contributes effectively to the positive outcomes for the pupils. In particular, the strong emphasis on healthy living promotes an outstanding response from the pupils. The curriculum is soundly based on national guidelines, and offers appropriate breadth and balance. Information and communication technology is used in many lessons. Nevertheless, the school is beginning to outgrow its curriculum. There are plans to adopt one that places greater emphasis on learning and applying the key skills that pupils need to succeed as learners and to develop as rounded individuals. The pupils thoroughly enjoy the good range of extra activities, educational and residential visits that enhance the curriculum.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school takes a very close interest in the welfare of every one of its pupils. The staff work closely with families, schools in the local cluster and outside agencies to help vulnerable pupils and their families manage difficult times in their lives. Great care is taken to smooth the transition to secondary school. Several parents whose children joined the school after the age of five commented how welcome their children were made to feel and how quickly they settled in. The school recently began to admit children who are at the early stages of learning English. A clear commitment to including and supporting them enabled these children to thrive and to get on in their learning. Arrangements for protecting and safeguarding children are robust and well known. Academic guidance for the pupils has developed well. Pupils and their parents regularly meet with teachers to talk about progress and set new targets.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

The headteacher gives a strong lead to the school's work. Other members of staff share his determination to make sure that all pupils achieve as well as they should, and there is a strong

sense of teamwork. There has been a change in culture since the last inspection and there is now a sharp focus on learning and progress. Teachers are increasingly accountable for the progress their pupils make. The challenging targets that were set for individuals and groups of pupils have largely been met. Excellent partnership working with schools in the local cluster helps spread good practice. Middle leaders play a strong role in the drive to raise standards. Their analysis of strengths and weaknesses contributes to the school's plans for improvement, and to the evaluation of the impact of their actions. This means that strengths are well known and areas for development accurately identified. All members of staff, pupils, parents and governors are involved in reviewing the school's successes and deciding on priorities. Relationships and communication with parents are excellent. The governing body gives the school unswerving support, but its role in holding it to account is underdeveloped.

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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? | 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?   | 1   |
| 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 <sup>1</sup> 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   | 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                                    | 1 |
| 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 |

<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>                                       | 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  | 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

10 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lydbrook Primary School, Lydbrook GL17 9PX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I inspected your school recently. It was good to see you at work and play and to talk to some of you about your school. What you said was very helpful to me.

You will not be surprised to learn that I think that your school is a good one. You and your parents told me this, and I could see it for myself. These are the main points:

- The teaching is good, which means that right from the start, you make good progress in your work, and by Year 6, standards are above average.
- You are truly committed to being healthy and keeping fit.
- The way you look after others is excellent, and your behaviour is very good.
- The adults care for everyone and look after you all very well.
- Even though the school is good, your headteacher and all the adults are determined to keep working to make it even better for you.

I know that there are already good plans for new things for next year. I have asked your teachers to make sure that they include two things. First, they should make sure that the younger children in Class 1 have plenty of chances to play and learn outdoors as well as in. Second, to be absolutely sure that you all make the best possible progress, teachers should check that you all fully understand what you are learning about before moving on to something else.

You can help, too, by continuing to do your best in lessons. I'm sure you will, because you like learning so much.

I wish you all good luck for the future, and I hope your team was successful at the sports competition.

Yours sincerely

Linda McGill Her Majesty's Inspector