

Leonard Stanley Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115688
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	312032
Inspection date	29 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Colin Lee

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Lacey
Headteacher	Ian D Smith
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2004
School address	Bath Road Leonard Stanley Stonehouse GL10 3LY
Telephone number	01453 823265
Fax number	01453 821180

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated in detail the following issues: • the achievement and standards of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 • pupils' progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 • pupils' own involvement in evaluating their own learning and progress. Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the subject leaders of mathematics, other staff, pupils, the chair of governors, and from the parental questionnaires. Lessons were observed, school self-evaluation and other documentation and samples of pupils' current and previous work were analysed. 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 form, were not justified

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Children's attainment on entry is below the levels expected for their age. Although the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average, the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

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. Pupils achieve well academically and there are some outstanding features, such as their excellent personal development and well-being and the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for all. It is a school full of laughter and enjoyment, with a buzz of purposeful activity in lessons and warm, caring relationships between pupils at work and play. Pupils are proud of their school and do much to make it successful by following the example set by the adults, who work closely together to constantly improve both provision and outcomes. This strong collective drive towards school improvement results from the very clear educational direction that the headteacher sets for the school.

The most recent area of improvement in the school is in the overall picture of pupils' progress, which is more consistent than in the past. Previously, good progress in the Foundation Stage has been maintained in Years 1 and 2, resulting in above average standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. Inconsistent progress in Years 3 to 6 has led to fluctuating performance by the end of Year 6, where standards have not always been as high as they should be in relation to the pupils' starting points in Year 3. This has been most noticeable in mathematics, where there has been a downward trend over time. These issues are being rectified by better use of assessment in planning future learning, more detailed tracking of pupils' progress and a range of measures to raise standards in both English and mathematics.

The improvement seen in younger pupils' literacy skills in the last three years is continuing. Each day starts with the Foundation Stage children and pupils in Years 1 and 2 working together in ability groups on an innovative programme for developing basic reading skills. The knock-on effect is that writing standards are also improving. This is prompting the school to consider extending the programme to older year groups, such is the marked effect on pupils' abilities and confidence. In order to raise standards in mathematics, the school has concentrated on the area of problem-solving and this is successfully increasing pupils' mathematical understanding. The most recent assessments show pupils in Years 3 to 6 to be making consistently good progress in mathematics as well as in reading, writing and science. Standards in Year 6 are above expected levels and particularly high in mathematics, putting the pupils on track to attain the challenging targets set for them by the end of the year.

The improvements in achievement have been driven by the good leadership in English and mathematics and the good quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. A significant strength in teaching is the planning of work that is carefully matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities. Those pupils with specific learning difficulties have good additional support from skilled, knowledgeable teaching assistants. Teachers use a range of strategies to extend pupils' learning, such as series of targets for pupils to work towards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils know their targets well and teachers are starting to involve the pupils more in assessing their own progress towards their targets, although this process is not yet fully established.

The school provides a rich and varied curriculum that is taught by linking subjects together to create a topic approach. This provides stimulating learning activities that pupils enjoy. Year 3's current topic is the Second World War and the pupils have made an Anderson shelter in the corner of the classroom. In the middle of their science lesson, an air raid siren suddenly went off and a group of pupils quickly got into the shelter and did not emerge until the 'All clear' siren sounded. The rest of the class quietly continued with their science work but it was clear

from discussion that pupils are gaining extensive knowledge and understanding of how life was affected by wartime conditions. A Year 2 pupil, about to carry out an internet search as part of research into the author Eric Carle, described her work as 'fun learning'. Such experiences illustrate just how much pupils enjoy their work. Alongside these activities, the school places a strong emphasis on ensuring that all pupils acquire basic skills in literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers plan some additional opportunities for these skills to be applied and developed in the topic work, although the link is too vague and staff do not explain clearly enough to pupils that they should be thinking about such skills as well as the topic-specific learning during lessons.

Pupils' enjoyment of school extends beyond lessons and they talk enthusiastically about the many additional learning opportunities that are provided for them outside the school day. The range of these activities is exceptional for a school of this size, with opportunities as diverse as drama and gardening as well as more traditional sporting and musical clubs. Every available space in classrooms and throughout the school is used for attractive displays of pupils' work and activities. Pupils delight in talking about these many celebrations of their work and life in school, showing great pride in activities such as their charity work and expressing appreciation of other pupils' work. Such positive attitudes are a feature of their outstanding personal development and well-being and this is something that pleases parents and carers as much as their children's academic progress. The many strengths in their personal development include exemplary behaviour and good attendance. They have an excellent appreciation of healthy lifestyles and talk knowledgeably about healthy eating and the importance of physical exercise. They also have a very clear understanding of safe practices both in and out of school. Pupils look out for each other and work hard to meet the high expectations the school has of them. They willingly accept the responsibilities they are asked to carry out. The school council has representatives from Year 2 to Year 6. All Year 6 pupils act as junior sports leaders and organise activities for younger pupils at lunchtime. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 help organise playground equipment. Year 5 pupils visit the playgroup on the school site and act as 'buddies' to the children to help their transition into the Foundation Stage. These examples indicate the significant contribution that the pupils make to the school community.

The headteacher and senior management team carry out rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, identifying areas for development and taking action that improves pupils' achievement and makes teaching more effective. This is good leadership and management. The school also benefits from the support and guidance of the governing body. Governors are fully involved in the day-to-day life of the school and use this experience effectively to inform strategic planning of the school's development. The effectiveness of the steps taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection, particularly the success of recent initiatives, shows that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents express their delight with how well the staff help the children settle into school life. Excellent liaison with the main pre-school provider ensures that the children are well known to staff before they start. Children join the school with skills slightly below those expected for their age, especially in aspects of their language development. The good quality of teaching and learning and the well-planned curriculum enables most children to make good progress. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, standards are at expected levels in all areas of learning. The majority are confident learners who have the maturity to work independently of

adult support. Their social skills are helped by the opportunities to have special responsibilities around the classroom, but the school has failed to build on this by not including children of this age in the school council. The teacher and teaching assistant work well together to plan and evaluate children's work. There is thorough recording of their achievement and regular checking of their progress in all areas of learning. The classroom and outdoor work area are attractive and stimulating.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects and share these learning intentions with pupils at the start of lessons.
- Consider extension of school council membership to pupils of all ages.

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

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

30 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leonard Stanley C of E Primary School, Stonehouse GL10 3LY

Thank you for making me welcome in your school and for talking to me so willingly. I thoroughly enjoyed joining you in lessons and seeing you at work. You told me how much you enjoy going to school and I think you have a good school that is successful in helping you to learn. The school does many good things and some are excellent. This is what I particularly appreciated:

- You are making good progress in your work.
- By the time you reach Year 6, many of you are reaching high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You behave excellently and this makes your school a friendly, pleasant place where everyone helps one another.
- Many of you have responsibilities around the school which you carry out very well and this helps the school run smoothly.
- Teaching is good and your teachers work hard to plan interesting things for you to do in your lessons. This is helping you to learn well.
- You told me how much you enjoy the very good range of clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school.
- All the adults look after you very well and make sure that you are safe and get help whenever you need it.
- The school is led well by your headteacher, and all the adults, including the governors, work very well together to improve it.

I have two recommendations to help your school to get even better:

- Teachers need to encourage you to think about how you can practise and improve your literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- All the classes in the school should be represented on the school council.

I hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Leonard Stanley Primary School to be an even better school.

Colin Lee Lead Inspector

30 April 2008

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