

# Langton Green Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118465
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	312949
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Patricia Davies

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	216
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Keith Fuller
<b>Headteacher</b>	Judith Lees
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Lampington Row Langton Green Tunbridge Wells TN3 0JG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01892 862648
<b>Fax number</b>	01892 864028

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. This inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the success of the school's strategies to increase pupils' academic performance, particularly that of the more able; the impact of improvements to assessment; and the extent to which subject leaders, key staff and the governing body are influential in driving improvements and reviewing their effect. Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, sampling pupils' work, discussion with pupils, staff and governors and from the school's assessment information. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Langton Green is broadly similar in size to many other primary schools. The vast majority of pupils are from White British families and those few from minority ethnic backgrounds speak English well. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Recently, the school has seen an increase in children's attainment when they first start school and it is now just above expectations. Since the school's last inspection there have been many changes to staff, including the headteacher, senior and key staff, most of whom joined the school three years ago. There have also been some more recent changes.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Langton Green is a good school with happy pupils who work conscientiously, achieve well and speak with pleasure of their many activities. Senior leaders have worked hard to improve provision and increase pupils' academic performance. Changes to assessment practices have raised expectations and enabled staff to set increasingly reliable and challenging targets for pupils in each year group. National test results clearly illustrate the success of new working practices with all groups of pupils, including the more able. Standards in national tests at Year 2 have risen from average to above average levels in the last three years. This improvement has been particularly marked in reading, where pupils have more independence in their selection of reading material. National test results at Year 6 reached high levels in 2006, having dipped in the previous two years. The most recent Year 6 results, taken last term, are of the same high calibre. The most significant improvement in this last set of tests was at the higher Level 5, with increased proportions reaching this level in English and science. These standards in particular serve to illustrate the school's efforts as they were gained with a much higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties than the year before. At this very early point in the school year, the school's data indicate that the attainment of the current Year 6 is similar to last year's group and the school continues to focus attention on pupils reaching the highest level possible.

The foundation for pupils' good achievement is a strong focus on developing the key skills within the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This feature is at the heart of the school's good curriculum, teaching and learning, and data are analysed carefully to identify where those skills need further attention. Staff also expect pupils to complete a good range and quantity of work, especially at Years 5 and 6 where work is substantial and progress most rapid. Pupils' application to learning during lessons makes an important contribution to their good progress; they are clear about what they have to do and their good productivity creates an industrious working atmosphere.

In order to nurture the more sophisticated skills and understanding that lift attainment to the higher levels, the school is promoting several initiatives. For example, investigation is a common feature in science, so that pupils are encouraged to explore and reason as young 'scientists'. Year 6 pupils did just this, using the study of their 'leaf litter' samples to create key questions for identifying and classifying what they found. This kind of challenging work is popular with pupils, who say that they really like this practical approach to science. Opportunities for drama, or to discuss ideas with others, are other stimulating characteristics of lessons that heighten pupils' interest and extend their participation and understanding. However, activities of this kind are not yet consistent features of all lessons, and activities are sometimes too mundane. In mathematics there is sometimes too much reliance on exercises to consolidate understanding, rather than solving 'real' mathematical problems that allow pupils to use and apply their knowledge and skills.

Children benefit from lively teaching in Reception, making good progress right from the start. Despite having joined the Reception class just a couple of weeks ago, this year's group are already confident and settled. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They behave well, with some restlessness amongst pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially when lesson activities sometimes lack imagination. Pupils report only rare cases of bullying that they say are dealt with effectively. In consultation with pupils, the school has extended outdoor resources to keep them active and interested. As a result, pupils play sensibly and safely at break times, accommodating various games of football and taking turns on the 'trim trail' and

'pirate ship'. Any child at the 'friendship stop' is quickly drawn in to play with others. Quiet moments in assembly are observed with reverence and pupils thoughtfully explore the values that are special to their school community. All these personal qualities prepare them well for secondary school and beyond, although the school is aware that it still has more to do to promote independent learning skills for use in later life.

Pupils remark positively about the opportunities for them to make visits out of school, learn to play a musical instrument and compete in sports matches with other schools. Pastoral care is strong and pupils say how much they appreciate the kindness of staff. Individual pupils know there are adults who will help them in times of difficulty. The school is vigorously promoting a healthy lifestyle and pupils are, therefore, well aware of what they should eat and what they should enjoy in moderation. Good attendance is actively encouraged, so that term-time holidays have been reduced by 50% over the last 12 months. A few parents expressed concern about the quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties, while others spoke warmly of this provision. Learning targets for these pupils focus sharply on their specific needs and they make the same good rate of progress as other pupils.

The success of the school's strategies to raise standards shows that it is well placed to increase its effectiveness further. The able leadership of the headteacher has created a culture of shared responsibility among staff for the school's performance. Staff members are deployed prudently and the quality of teaching is carefully monitored and enhanced where necessary by senior staff. Opportunities for professional development, through links with other schools, national programmes and local authority sources, are used well to develop the skills of senior and subject leaders. An honest and accurate appraisal of the school's work ensures a clear understanding of priorities.

Subject leaders have taken a major role in the introduction of exciting initiatives to enhance teaching, and their enthusiasm has successfully encouraged staff to try out new ideas. They already monitor many aspects of their subject, but are not yet systematically checking the impact of these new initiatives in lessons, nor the consistency with which they are used. The governing body ensures that it is kept well informed so that it can be both supportive and challenging. It plays a full role in planning the school's direction and consults with a wide range of stakeholders when drawing up strategic plans.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make a smooth transition into Reception, aided by close links with local pre-school groups, a thorough induction programme and a gradual introduction to a full school day. This carefully orchestrated start illustrates the close attention given to children's personal and social development. Imaginative activities bring together a wide range of learning and produce great excitement when children experience success. Skilful questioning and constant encouragement also ensure that these children progress well. Last year standards were above expectations by the end of Reception. In order to improve provision further, the school is now strengthening the transition from Reception into Year 1.

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

- Ensure that lesson activities are consistently interesting and stimulating in order to enhance pupils' enjoyment and participation, and extend their knowledge and understanding.
- Make sure that subject leaders systematically check that new initiatives are used frequently and effectively in lessons.

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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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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

<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	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

19 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langton Green Primary School, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells TN3 0JG

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed being with you all and chatting to so many of you and a particular thank you to those of you who met with me at lunchtime. This letter is to tell you about some of the things I found out while I was with you. First and foremost, your school is doing well. The questionnaires I had back from your parents showed that a large majority of them think so too. You also told me about how much you enjoy your school, and especially the new equipment in the playground and the visits you make in connection with your work. It was good to hear you praise the kindness of staff. The school is well led and all the adults work hard to make sure that you are safe and happy and make good progress. Your hard work during lessons also makes an important contribution to your good achievement.

Here are some other important things about your school:

- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start, and even this early in the school year children are already confident and making good progress.
- As a result of all your good progress, standards have improved in the national tests at Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching is good, and staff have introduced some new and exciting activities to make it even better, although these are not yet happening as often as they should, you told me that you particularly enjoy your investigations in science.
- You behave well and play together safely and sensibly at break times.
- Staff keep a careful check on your progress and set challenging targets for you to reach, which are helping to raise standards.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better:

- Make sure that your lessons have many more interesting and exciting activities for you to do so that you get lots more enjoyment from your work and increase your knowledge and understanding.
- Ensure that those members of staff who look after particular subjects check in on lessons regularly to make sure that these new activities are being used often and successfully.

With best wishes

Patricia Davies Lead inspector



19 September 2007

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Lead inspector