

# Long Bennington Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120529
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313654
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bob Roberts

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	268
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jene Higgs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Eveleigh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Main Road Long Bennington Newark Nottinghamshire NG23 5EH

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	313654

**Telephone number**  
**Fax number**

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Long Bennington Church of England school is situated in the village of Long Bennington, a few miles north of Grantham in Lincolnshire. It has slightly more pupils than most other primary schools. There is Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision that offers education for children aged four to five years. The majority of pupils come from White British families and are drawn from the local area. The percentages of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is not English are below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including pupils with a statement of special educational need, is well below the national average. Most children start Reception with knowledge and skills that are broadly expected for their age. The school has a Silver Arts Mark and an Active Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Long Bennington is an outstanding school. The main reason for this is the headteacher. She has established a clear vision for the school and very high standards. At the same time she has encouraged and nurtured the talents of the staff and developed a curriculum that is imaginative and exciting, one that makes the experience of pupils challenging but hugely enjoyable at the same time.

Most pupils begin their experience of the school in the Reception classes, as part of the Foundation Stage. The outstanding personal development that pupils receive starts here for many of them, although the school has rightly identified that the range of activities through which they learn could be enhanced even further. From Year 1 pupils make excellent progress through the school and by the end of Year 6 the standards reached are consistently very high. The teaching they receive is excellent; it is almost always good and often outstanding. The curriculum they experience is exceptional, developing their creativity and confidence as well as their knowledge and understanding. The school has identified that even stronger links between literacy and numeracy and the foundation subjects of the curriculum would improve the curriculum yet further. The care, guidance and support that pupils receive is also outstanding in this very inclusive environment.

Pupils enjoy coming to school enormously. Attendance is excellent and pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They feel safe and secure. They respond well to the encouragement they receive to live healthily. The school creates opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility in helping with the running of the school and they respond very well. In terms of confidence and attitudes, as well as core skills, they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stages of their education.

The leadership and management of the school at all levels are outstanding. Senior leaders support the headteacher effectively. Subject leaders exercise real responsibility for their subjects with a rare commitment and enthusiasm. Governors fulfil their role particularly well, seeking to challenge when appropriate as well as support the school. A large majority of the parents who responded to the questionnaire that was part of this inspection were positive about the school.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

A significant number of children join with lower than expected speaking and listening skills, which affects their attainment across other areas of learning. The school addresses this well, so that children of all abilities make good progress and by the time they leave Reception, most children reach the early learning goals and a good number exceed these. Children thoroughly enjoy their time in Reception because learning opportunities are mostly engaging and interesting and because adults develop high quality relationships with them. Children's welfare is promoted outstandingly well. Arrangements to promote children's safety and health are good. They learn, for example, how to use a saw safely when cutting wood, and that they need to wash their hands before eating. Parents say that they appreciate the information that the school provides for them about their children's learning. Leadership of the EYFS is good. There is a clear understanding of what needs to be done to further improve the good provision. The school rightly plans to increase the opportunities for children to use their initiative as to their choice

of activities. There is further scope for the leader of the EYFS to make fuller use of the ample information about children's progress to plan for the future.

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

- Develop the range of learning activities available in the Foundation Stage so that pupils have more opportunities to initiate and choose activities.
- Strengthen the links between literacy and numeracy and the schemes of work in foundation subject areas.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Children leave the EYFS and enter Year 1 with levels of learning and development at least expected for their age and a good number above. The standards achieved by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been consistently high over many years and the progress that pupils make is outstanding. The assessments of standards in Year 2 in 2008 show excellent progress with pupils reaching well above national standards in writing and exceptionally high standards in reading and science. The 2008 (unvalidated) national test results for Year 6 indicate a slight dip from recent years in the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in all subjects. However, the levels of attainment in reading, writing and science are still significantly above the national average. In mathematics, levels are above average, but not by such a margin as before. For this group of pupils, these achievements represent excellent progress. The outstanding support and encouragement the pupils receive along with the consistently high expectations ensure that all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make excellent progress. Girls do better than boys, especially in English and to a lesser degree in science. In mathematics, the performance of boys and girls is equal. The boys as well as the girls, however, do much better across the board than their peers nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels at the end of Year 6 illustrates the level of challenge and expectation in place for the more able children.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides a warm, supportive and stimulating environment and consequently the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school, as is suggested by the excellent school attendance. Behaviour is extremely good, around the school and in lessons. Pupils play together enthusiastically, showing care and restraint when necessary. They feel very secure and take full advantage of what the school offers them.. They are surrounded by high quality art, which they have produced themselves, and have opportunities to learn about other countries and cultures. Assemblies are periods for enjoyment, participation and reflection. Many older pupils take positions of responsibility, and they exercise these with due seriousness. They show excellent attitudes to learning and, in the words of one pupil, 'lessons are inspiring'. They are very conscious of what it means to live healthily and the level of their participation in the activities that are offered outside the classroom is very high. The high levels of literacy and numeracy, the good skills in information and communication technology (ICT), and, not least, the excellent attitudes to working positively and cooperatively with others, all mean that they are being extremely well prepared for later stages of their lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Almost all the teaching seen during the inspection was at least good and a significant amount of it was outstanding. Teachers plan lessons very well, preparing work to suit the needs of particular groups effectively. There is a high level of challenge to match the needs of all pupils. Modern computer technology is used by teachers to enhance teaching and learning skilfully. Pupils themselves develop their computer skills very well. There is a strong emphasis on making the learning as creative as possible and building in opportunities for investigation and experiment. Good links were seen between some subjects, such as between a science investigation and ICT skills, although there is further room for strengthening the integration of literacy and numeracy with other subjects. The marking of pupils' work is consistent and helpful. The quality of pupils' work on display in classrooms and around the school is outstanding. Teaching assistants work very effectively with those who need extra support.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum that the school offers is exceptional. It is imaginative and innovative as well as being compliant with national requirements. The school has enthusiastically adopted Spanish as a foreign language and all pupils are learning it, as well as the teachers themselves. It is a visible and real thread running through the school. Each week all pupils take part in a block of creative arts, covering sports and the arts. Teachers are encouraged to offer opportunities to pupils within this time, such as weaving and video recording, that they themselves would like to teach: the outcome has been a rich programme of imaginative activities, resulting in some exceptional work. There are other innovations such as the meetings each half term of the mixed year 'Personalised Groups', when pupils reflect together on their experience of school, their learning, and other wider issues. Outside the classroom the school offers a good range of clubs, and many chances to take part in national and international competitions and ventures. Teachers are currently planning links with South Africa to add another strand to the school's international links that already exist with Malawi.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

There is a high level of commitment from the staff to encouraging both enjoyment and achievement. This is evident in lessons and through the other activities the school offers. Pupils are set challenging targets and they are not only able to talk about their targets but clearly enjoy the challenges they are given, recognising that they are achievable rather than daunting. They know they are being helped to improve and achieve in an environment in which they are cared for. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust and the school takes its health and safety responsibilities seriously. Extra help is provided, in timely, flexible and varied ways, to those pupils who are not making the progress the school expects. Very effective arrangements are made to ensure that pupils with particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities can take a full part in school life. Communications with parents and other partners are very good. Governors have excellent links to individual classes and spend regular 'open mornings' in the school. There is a good web site, and the school works hard at gathering the views of parents and others and at modifying its provision in response to these views.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The headteacher provides exceptional leadership. Her leadership is successfully focused on raising standards and achievement but at the same time creating an environment that allows both teachers and pupils to express themselves and flourish. There is a clear vision for the school. She has high standards and leads by example, evident in the excellent assemblies and her involvement in extra curricular activities. She nurtures her staff, recognising their strengths and empowering them to take responsibility. There is a strong sense of shared leadership. Subject leaders demonstrate strong ownership and commitment to their curriculum areas. Monitoring and evaluation processes are well established, very well planned, rigorous, and lead to the maintenance of high levels of progress. The governing body has a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development and provide appropriate challenge for the headteacher. The school has strong links with the parish council and the village, good involvement with national initiatives and the pupils develop a strong sense of global issues, thereby promoting community cohesion. Resources are well managed and secure excellent value for money.



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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

24 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Long Bennington Church of England Primary School, Main Road, Long Bennington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5EH

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. We very much enjoyed our visit to your school and would like to thank you for the friendly way in which so many of you greeted and spoke to us.

Long Bennington is an outstanding school. The most obvious thing about it is how happy people are to be there and work there, including you. There is a lovely family atmosphere. You clearly enjoy coming to school, you work hard and behave very well. The teaching you receive is excellent. Teachers work hard to make the lessons enjoyable, especially with things like the creative arts activities. You enjoy lessons because so often they allow you to be creative. You also enjoy the fact that you are challenged to do your best. It is a school where you feel cared for and where you feel safe. The way in which you play and work together, and contribute to the school and the local community, is outstanding. You make excellent progress in your subjects and, consequently, the standards you reach are exceptionally high. Attendance is high and many of you take advantage of the many opportunities open to you.

The headteacher and all the staff at the school are doing a very good job. They work very well together, sharing ideas and are always trying to think of new ways to improve things for you. They know, for instance, that a wider range of activities should be available for children in the Reception classes. They are planning to improve links between your literacy and numeracy and some of the other subjects. Many of your parents filled in the questionnaire that was part of the inspection. Almost all of them think very highly of your headteacher and all the staff. They appreciate the way the school has high standards but also wants you to develop as rounded individuals in preparing you for the next stages of your lives.

We all wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bob Roberts

Lead inspector