

Loddington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121981
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314175
Inspection date	14 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David James
Headteacher	Susan Pauline Walters
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Main Street Loddington Kettering NN14 1LA
Telephone number	01536 710175
Fax number	01536 710175

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school with three mixed aged classes. The attainment of children on starting in Reception is in line with that expected for children of this age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, which is improving. All pupils are cherished as unique individuals within a caring Christian ethos and provided with a calm and friendly atmosphere in which to learn. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and are pleased with the many interesting experiences given to their children. One parental comment is typical of many, 'Even though Loddington is a small school, it always offers a wide range of educational activities that all pupils take part in. My son enjoys school so much he wants to go there on Saturdays and Sundays.'

The drive and enthusiasm of the headteacher have been at the heart of the school's improvement. The range of initiatives she has introduced and overseen over the last two years to eradicate the significant underachievement of many pupils is proving successful. All involved in the life of the school share her commitment to all pupils achieving their full capability and a strong team spirit is evident. Subject leaders are relatively new to their roles and are not yet fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision in their subjects.

As a result of improvements, especially in the quality of teaching and learning, the achievement of all pupils is now at least satisfactory. Firm foundations for learning are laid in Reception and children now make satisfactory progress in all aspects of their work. This satisfactory progress is maintained throughout the rest of the school. Consequently, most pupils attain standards that are broadly average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils' skills in writing are a weaker aspect of attainment in English. This stems from there being insufficient opportunities for them to refine and improve their skills by writing creatively in subjects other than English. Changes have been made to the procedures for identifying pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This has led to extra support being given at an earlier stage to meet their individual needs. As a result, they make the same progress as other pupils.

Improvements in the planning of lessons mean that the needs of pupils of different ages in classes are now met more successfully. However, information about pupils' progress and attainment is not used consistently by teachers to set work that effectively matches pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils' progress, especially that of the more able, is sometimes hindered. Pupils behave well and this has a positive effect on the progress they make. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to take on responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council. Pupils are kind and considerate to others, which makes a positive contribution to the happy and friendly atmosphere evident throughout the school.

The curriculum has been effectively extended by the introduction of a variety of enrichment activities. A good example of this is the provision of a wider range of after school clubs for pupils to take part in. Pupils and parents are appreciative of the time given by staff to run these activities. The pastoral care and support of pupils is strong and there are good links with other organisations to promote their well-being. Parents are particularly pleased with the much improved links with the local church, such as the regular Family Services that they can attend.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Staff are aware of the needs of children of this age and so are able to help them settle quickly into everyday routines when they first start school. They provide children with practical and interesting activities that enable them to

achieve in a satisfactory manner. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1 most children are working securely within the levels expected of them in all areas of their learning. Children behave well and work well together in pairs and small groups. They show confidence in carrying out their activities and are willing to make choices for themselves. The nature of the outside area means it cannot be used continuously to support children's development. This limits the progress children make in some aspects of their learning, particularly their creative and physical development. Links with parents are good and they are kept fully informed of their children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English by providing more opportunities for pupils to write imaginatively across the curriculum.
- Ensure teaching and learning are consistent so that pupils always make at least good progress.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so they are more actively involved in school improvement.

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' achievement is satisfactory and so they attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are broadly average by the end of Year 6. In English, pupils' performance is stronger in reading than in writing. Most of the underachievement of previous years has been eliminated and so the majority of pupils now make at least satisfactory progress. There are still some pupils who are not achieving as well as they could and these are being given extra support. It is evident this is proving successful in accelerating the progress they make. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because of the well targeted extra support they are given.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are well mannered, polite and courteous. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and are willing to give help to others when needed. They are adopting healthy lifestyles, as is shown in the way they talk knowledgeably about the need to eat a balanced diet and to take regular exercise. They know how to stay safe, as is seen in the way they move responsibly in and around school. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school community by willingly taking on posts of responsibility and carrying out their duties diligently. They also contribute well to the wider village community, such as by running stalls at the village fete and taking part in fund raising events for local charities. Pupils are developing basic skills soundly and are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and this has a good impact on the progress they make. Relationships are very good throughout the school and this helps make classrooms calm

and friendly places in which to learn. At the start of lessons, teachers make sure pupils are clear about what they are to learn and how to set about their tasks. Marking has been improved and now satisfactorily suggests to pupils how they might make improvements in their work. Pupils are becoming involved in evaluating for themselves how well they are doing and what to do next to improve. However, this is at an early stage of development and is inconsistent between classes. In addition, the progress that pupils make is sometimes limited because the activities provided for them lack sufficient challenge. Teaching assistants give valuable support to all pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils talk enthusiastically about the improved range of out of school clubs in which they can take part. These include gardening, cookery, samba drumming and various sporting activities. They have the opportunity to go on a variety of educational visits, including a residential stay. These make a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. There are good links with others, such as professional sports coaches, to develop pupils' skills across a range of aspects. The curriculum is further enriched by all pupils in Years 2 to 6 having a weekly French lesson. This said, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills by writing imaginatively in subjects other than English. Links between subjects are not well established. This limits pupils' ability to use skills developed in one subject to support learning in other subjects. There is good provision for promoting pupils' personal and social development, which is reflected in the good progress pupils make in this aspect of their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There are rigorous safeguarding procedures in place to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. Child protection arrangements are thorough and all staff know what to do if they have concerns about the well-being of a pupil. Parents are very appreciative of the care taken of their children while in school. Pupils also feel well cared for and one pupil commented, 'We feel safe in school and know we can talk to an adult if we have any worries.' There are good links with external agencies to provide extra support for individual pupils when needed. The procedures for tracking the progress pupils make have been improved and are now satisfactory, giving a clear view of the achievement and attainment of individual pupils. However, the information collected is not used consistently by teachers in planning lessons to set work that effectively challenges pupils of different abilities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and this has enabled leaders to correctly identify and prioritise areas for development. These include improving pupils' skills in writing and developing the role of subject leaders. Performance management has been improved so that there are clear links between the professional development of staff and whole school priorities. For instance, teachers now have the responsibility for raising pupils' standards included in their own annual targets. As a result, most pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. Most of the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance has, by necessity, been carried out by the headteacher in recent years. The school is now in a position where leadership roles can be

delegated to other staff, as is seen in the increasing responsibilities being given to subject leaders. This is at an early stage and their role in promoting school improvement is underdeveloped. Governors are supportive of the school and are becoming more involved in helping it to improve further. The capacity of leaders to make the changes necessary for school improvement is satisfactory.

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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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	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

15 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Loddington Cof E Primary School, Loddington NN14 1LA

Thank you for the really friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the things you do. Yours is a satisfactory school which is improving. Most of you now make at least satisfactory progress and reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are as would be expected by the end of Year 6. Your parents are very pleased with the way the school looks after you and the way staff give their time to let you take part in the increased variety of after school activities.

What we liked most about your school.

- You enjoy coming to school, behave well and are kind and considerate to others.
- You are adopting healthy lifestyles well.
- You make a good contribution to the life of the village.
- You have positive attitudes to your learning and this is helping you make progress.
- There is a good range of out of school activities for you to take part in.
- All adults take good care of you and make sure you are safe while in school.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good and help make the school a friendly place in which to work and play.
- The people in charge of the school are working hard to help the school improve further.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Raise standards in English by giving you more opportunities to write imaginatively in other subjects.
- Make sure everybody is given work that makes you think hard so that you make good progress in your learning.
- Help the teachers in charge of subjects to make improvements in them so you reach higher standards.

We hope you continue to enjoy your learning and carry on being kind to others.

All my best wishes for the future

Melvyn Hemmings Lead inspector

Annex B

15 February 2008

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Melvyn Hemmings
Lead inspector