

Ladygrove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123438
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	314598
Inspection dates	10–11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Eason
Headteacher	Paul Sanderson
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2004
School address	Old Office Road Dawley Telford TF4 2LF
Telephone number	01952 388370
Fax number	01952 506686

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is similar in size to most primary schools. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is just below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also just below average, whilst the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly average. In recognition of its work, the school has received Investors in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Bronze Eco School accreditation.

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 and effective school where pupils achieve well. Pupils really enjoy school and their behaviour and attitudes illustrate this well. They are polite, courteous and welcoming. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their good academic achievement and personal development prepares them well for the future. Pupils are extremely well cared for to ensure their safety and welfare, although the guidance provided through marking and target setting does not always help them understand clearly how to improve their work. Parents are exceptionally positive about the school, and many commented on how much they valued the commitment and hard work of the staff. One said, for example, 'Ladygrove is a great school, and our children love going there.'

When children start in Reception their knowledge and skills are below the levels expected, with a considerable number having weaknesses in their language skills. During their time in Reception the children achieve well, with most reaching the goals set for them. This good achievement continues thereafter, with pupils currently in Year 6 reaching above-average standards.

In the classrooms, relationships are good, teaching assistants are deployed well and teachers make good use of a variety of resources and strategies to make the lessons interesting. Lesson planning is more consistently effective in meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than the needs of more-able pupils. The interesting and varied curriculum contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their learning and personal development, including developing healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils report that they greatly enjoy the outstanding range of visits and musical and sporting activities that the school provides. This enthusiasm also shows in the extent of their involvement in the school and local community.

The headteacher and other members of staff are a dedicated team committed to doing the best they can for their pupils. Self-evaluation has successfully identified areas and strategies for improvement, and this has contributed well to improving standards. The school is aware that systems need further refinement, as assessment data are not always used fully effectively in identifying pupils' achievement. Governors support the school well, and they are presently working to strengthen their monitoring role. Good use is made of outside bodies, such as sports coaches and special needs advisers, in supporting the work of the school. Improvements since the previous inspection and more recent improvements in provision and outcomes for pupils show that the school has a good capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle very happily into the school, and the adults provide them with a most appropriate balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for them to choose for themselves. The children behave well, although a very small number sometimes find it difficult to maintain concentration on the tasks they have chosen. A good range of resources is provided, with the outdoor area, especially the forest school scheme, being used particularly well. The staff work hard to create a friendly and caring learning environment, and the children enjoy school and develop good social skills. As a result of good teaching, the children make good progress, with most attaining the levels that are expected by the end of the year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers consistently challenge pupils in their work, especially the more able.
- Improve the quality of marking and target setting, so that pupils know what they need to do to improve their work further.
- Provide a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress, to ensure that they are all achieving as well as they can.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with levels below those expected and, in some previous years, well below those expected. They make a good start in Reception, and by the end of the year most attain the levels expected. In Years 1 and 2, pupils also achieve well. In 2007 they attained above-average standards, and they continue to do so currently.

Standards in Year 6 are above average and this represents good achievement for this year group from their starting points. Similarly, the broadly average standards reached by Year 6 in 2007 showed good achievement from their starting points. The school makes good provision for pupils with learning difficulties, and this is helping them make consistently good progress towards their targets. The school recognises that progress made by more-able pupils, although good overall, does not have the same consistency and that on occasions it could be better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well, they show great enjoyment in school and they have most sensible attitudes to their work. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and that bullying is not a problem. They are confident in the support of staff should any problems arise. Attendance has improved and is now good. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and the wider community. In school, pupils readily carry out a variety of responsibilities, for example, as members of the school council and the eco committee. They are also very active in participating in the life of the local community, including helping to improve the environment.

Pupils have an exceptional understanding of how to live healthy lives, and they benefit from the very good opportunities provided by the school for exercise and sport. Their understanding of the multicultural society in which we live is less well developed. The school successfully develops in its pupils a range of personal and academic skills to prepare them well for their next stage of education, as well as for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good planning and close cooperation between teachers and teaching assistants means that teaching is effective and pupils learn well. Classes are well managed and relationships are a strength. Lessons are lively, with a good mixture of whole-class and group activities. Furthermore, teachers use a good range of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, to make the lessons interesting. Pupils respond well to these activities, they concentrate well and they work with enthusiasm. Most of all, they enjoy themselves. Consequently, the pupils successfully develop and reinforce both their knowledge and skills. Planning for pupils with learning

difficulties is good, enabling them all to take a full part in lessons and make consistently good progress. Although planning takes account of the needs of more-able pupils, it does not have the same consistency. On occasions, the additional tasks provided for more-able pupils do not stretch them adequately and, as a result, the pace of learning for these pupils sometimes slows. Marking does not always give pupils a clear message about how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is successfully enhanced by an exceptional variety of educational outings, activities using the exciting and varied resources in the school grounds, and visitors, such as the local dog warden. Music is a strong feature in the school and many pupils learn musical instruments, as well as joining the flourishing orchestra and choir. The outstanding focus on caring for the environment involves all pupils. The recently established forest school scheme is already a good place to observe living plants and creatures, and is a setting for story telling. Pupils tend a small but flourishing allotment and, for example, Year 1 pupils successfully used a visit there as a stimulus for computer work. Access to computers is good and all pupils readily use their computer skills in other subjects.

Links between subjects are limited. The school recognises this and is planning a move towards a topic-based curriculum, where subjects are more closely integrated. In Reception, there is a good balance between children choosing their own work and doing more-formal tasks. The curriculum makes a very good contribution to developing pupils' personal and social skills, especially their health and safety awareness.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are outstanding and contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school. Staff are alert to signs that any pupil might be worried or anxious. The very good relationships between adults and pupils help pupils to feel secure and settled. Parents speak highly of the way in which the school cares for their children. Pupils work in a safe environment, with teachers taking every care to ensure their well-being. Safety checks and risk assessments are carried out regularly. The school site is secure and pupils are routinely reminded about the need to take care, such as when handling equipment in physical education. The school very actively promotes healthy lifestyles and physical activity.

Guidance and support in class are mostly effective and pupils develop appropriate skills to become successful learners. However, some of the targets provided for pupils are too broad and do not always make clear what they need to do to improve their work further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school with enthusiasm, expertise and a clear commitment to improvement. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. There is a strong sense of teamwork, together with a strong desire to make the best possible provision for the pupils, and to improve the school still further. The development of a delightful learning environment provides an exciting backdrop in which pupils can learn effectively and achieve well.

The school has good systems for finding out how well it is doing, including seeking the views of parents. The self-review has accurately identified strengths and areas for development and this has led to improvements in standards. Procedures need further refinement to ensure that assessment data are used fully effectively in tracking pupils' progress. Senior leaders recognise that more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in their work.

Subject leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of their subjects and have actively initiated and supported strategies for making improvements. Governors are regular visitors to the school. They are fully involved in planning and monitoring the budget and the school development plan. They recognise that they need to become more involved in the scrutiny of pupil performance data.

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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?	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	1
The attendance of learners	2
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

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

12 October 2007

Dear Pupils,

Ladygrove Primary School, Dawley, Telford TF4 2LF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit and it was good speaking to you. My colleague especially enjoyed talking to the school council, and I really enjoyed joining you in assembly. I am writing to tell you what we found out about the school, what we think is good and what we think could be made better. Overall, you are in a good school where you are doing well with your work and in your personal development. You are taught well. Your school is well run, and your headteacher and other staff know what they need to do to make the school even better.

These things are some of the strengths of the school.

- Your headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants work hard to produce an exciting place in which you can learn.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are good.
- You enjoy a good curriculum with an exceptional range of extra activities that the school provides, such as visits and different clubs.
- You know about how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you well and take very great care of you.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

These are things the school has been asked to improve.

- Make sure that you all get work in lessons that suits you and is hard enough for you.
- Provide you with clearer targets and comments in marking, to make sure you understand how to improve your work.
- Keep a closer check on the progress you are making, to ensure that you are all doing as well as you can.

You can help, too, by trying to make your work even better.

We wish you all good luck for the future.

Best wishes,

Martin James Lead inspector

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Lead inspector