

# Lydbury North CofE (A) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123547
<b>Local Authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314633
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judy Jones

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vacant Position
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Langton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Lydbury North Lydbury North SY7 8AU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01588 680277
<b>Fax number</b>	01588 680277

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a very small school serving the village of Lydbury North and the surrounding rural area. Children are taught in two mixed age classes: Key Stage 2 and Foundation Stage with Key Stage 1. The headteacher left at the end of 2007 and the Key Stage 1 teacher has taken over as acting headteacher. A formerly part-time teacher is currently teaching the Key Stage 2 class. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is below average though this changes from year to year. Children come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. All children have White British heritage. The attainment of children when they enter the school varies from year to year and is below the level expected in most years.

The school achieved the National Healthy Schools standard in 2006 and is a designated Eco School.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This good school enables children of all ages to make good academic progress and develop into mature and confident young people. The school places a high priority on ensuring pupils' emotional well-being, so that they are happy in school and enjoy living and learning together. Pupils are kind to each other, respect each others' differences and take on responsibilities willingly. They attend school regularly and speak of it enthusiastically. They know how to keep safe and healthy and make sure others are safe as well. Their behaviour is exemplary. Standards fluctuate year on year because of the small numbers in each year group but over the last three years assessment and test results at the end of each key stage have been broadly average. Achievement is good in most years and, in the current Year 6, pupils are achieving at levels that are generally above what could be expected of them in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards of the most able are above average. There is some unevenness however, and progress in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory rather than good. The school identified writing as an area for improvement and as a result of focused support, standards in writing are now generally higher than those in reading. Children with exceptional needs or difficulties make good progress because of effective use of outside agencies to provide specialist support.

The satisfactory curriculum has many good features. Specialist subjects such as music and art are well covered by specialist staff, visiting teachers and visiting artists. There are many trips and visits to enrich learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used in a number of subjects but the number of computers is lower than expected for even a small school. The unreliability of the interactive whiteboards in the classrooms means that pupils, particularly the younger ones, are less skilled in using ICT for presentations and handling data than is usual. Pupils use ICT competently for research in science and other subjects, but they do not use computers for practical activities such as collecting experimental evidence in science.

The school has dealt well with the key issues from the previous inspection and good leadership has been maintained, in spite of changes. The acting headteacher has taken on this role this term with skill and vision and the school is in a good position to improve further. The quality of teaching is good but, because of the changes in personnel, the teachers in the two classes are not yet sufficiently aware of each other's practice to make the transfer from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 as effective as it should be. This is apparent, for example, in the use of individual targets to support learning, where effective practice in Key Stage 1 is not maintained in Key Stage 2.

The reorganisation in September of the governing body's structure has made governors more able to evaluate the work of the school and guide its development. Evaluation of the school's work is accurate in most instances but until recently did not involve governors sufficiently, and their role in this respect is still evolving. The school gives good value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Although there is a wide range of individual attainment on entry, children start in the Reception class with levels of knowledge and skills that are generally below the levels expected. They get off to a good start, particularly in their emotional development because good records ensure that each child is known well as an individual and support is matched well to their needs. The curriculum is well balanced to take advantage of working sometimes with the Years 1 and 2

children while making sure there are plenty of suitable Foundation Stage activities. For example, in the whole-class topic about desert islands, Foundation Stage children are included in drama sessions about travelling to a desert island but they move on to other activities such as cooking when pupils in Years 1 and 2 write about their journey. Transition into Year 1 is seamless. Provision for outdoor play is a weakness, at present, because there is so little outdoor space. Good planning deals with this as far as possible by using the limited space flexibly, and by making additional provision away from the school once a week. The school has permission for improved outdoor provision and work is due to start shortly.

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

- Make sure teachers in both classes share each other's practice to improve the transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, such as in the use of individual targets.
- Extend the use of ICT to ensure all pupils develop the skills of data collecting, handling and presentation, and use these regularly and frequently in their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

From the start of the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6 children make good, though sometimes uneven, progress. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is slower than in other years, in part because work in these years is not so well focused on what pupils can already do and what they need to do next. However, in Years 5 and 6 progress is rapid and pupils make up so much ground that from the start to the end of Key Stage 2 progress is good, particularly in writing and mathematics. Good speaking and listening skills, particularly of the oldest pupils, mean that discussions are interesting and help pupils to increase their knowledge by exploring and developing ideas suggested by the teacher. While good progress in numeracy and literacy helps pupils' ability to achieve economic well-being, achievement in ICT is only satisfactory, because pupils are less familiar or confident with the full range of ICT skills such as the use of databases or control programs.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well through individual work and help from teachers and classroom assistants. Most make good progress, and a few are making exceptional progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good and behaviour is outstanding. From their earliest moments, children learn to cooperate with others and develop an enthusiastic attitude to school. Older pupils comment that, 'It's a good school and we work hard and learn.' They enjoy lessons and other activities, such as clubs, and take pride in their work. All agree they feel safe and happy.

Pupils take healthy eating seriously and recognise the value of sport and exercise. They make a big contribution both to the school and village communities. Older pupils help little ones and willingly accept responsibility. Pupils are good listeners, partly because they, themselves, are listened to by adults. They rightly feel they have a say in the way the school runs. Emotional development is a strength and was demonstrated when, in an assembly, mixed age groups were asked to present a 'machine' made up of all the pupils in the group to carry out a task of their choosing. Spontaneously, one group formed themselves into a 'friendship machine' that drew

an outsider into its circle. The curriculum includes learning about other cultures but there is at present little to tell pupils about multiculturalism in this country. There are plans to redress this but currently pupils' understanding of modern multi-ethnic society is a relative weakness.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers manage the mixed age groups with skill, either splitting classes into groups by age or ability, or by working with a mixed age group in activities such as drama. Lessons are carefully planned and teaching assistants or visiting teachers deployed efficiently. Occasionally, teachers rely too heavily on the group not being taught at that moment to get on independently, and do not see when a pupil is stuck on a task. Children respect their teachers and helpers and lessons have a sense of purpose and achievement.

Work is usually well matched to the needs of the particular group, and is sufficiently challenging to make children think, and to want to find out more. The use of talking partners in all years develops pupils' confidence and helps older pupils to formulate arguments and express themselves clearly. Assessment in class is usually good, and teachers and pupils use small whiteboards very well for drafting ideas and assessing understanding. Work is marked thoroughly and children know what to do to improve. However, the good target setting for individuals in Key Stage 1 is not followed into Key Stage 2 where it is less systematic.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is under review, with the intention of making it more exciting. As it stands the content is satisfactory apart from the need to develop more opportunities for pupils to use ICT. There are some strengths, such as in the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning project. This project underpins the excellent relationships throughout the school, contributing much to pupils' personal development and well-being. Visiting artists and poets enrich the curriculum and provide experiences beyond the scope of the school. Topics in Key Stage 1 are used well to enthuse children and challenge them to express themselves in words and to use their imaginations. In spite of the small numbers children have many opportunities to take part in team games through collaboration with other schools.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Parents cannot speak highly enough of the care and guidance their children are given to develop both personally and academically. Parents of children with particular needs or strengths are very pleased with the support offered by the school. Pupils are very well cared for, and support for children needing additional help is given sensitively and is highly effective. Arrangements for safeguarding and ensuring the health and safety of all pupils meet requirements. Academic guidance is satisfactory. It is good in Key Stage 1 where children are given clear written targets that are modified as they progress. In Key Stage 2 guidance is not as thorough. Although pupils know how to put right what they do wrong, they do not have achievable learning goals that help them with, for example, punctuation.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The acting headteacher has picked up the reins very quickly and has the confidence of colleagues and parents. Her clear vision for maintaining the existing strengths of the school and developing the school's effectiveness further is shared by all. She seeks the views of colleagues and of children and parents before acting decisively. Significant recent improvements are the clear plans for making assessment data easier to analyse in order to raise achievement, particularly in Years 3 and 4. As a consequence, the school has set challenging targets for achievement and the capacity to improve is good.

The reorganised governing body is in a good position to share the self-evaluation process and is establishing good procedures to ensure this. However this has not yet had an impact; and the school's self-evaluation document is not at present sufficiently focused on the need to assess the impact of initiatives and practices.





## 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	3
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	1
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?	2
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?	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	3
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	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**

8 February 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Lydbury North CofE Primary School, Lydbury North SY7 8AU

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. You told me how much you enjoy being at Lydbury and I could see from your lessons and playtime what a happy school this is. I was very impressed by the way you look after each other and this showed very well in your assembly when a group of you made yourselves into a 'friendship machine'. You are polite and thoughtful people who know how to stay fit and healthy. You enjoy your trips and working with the visitors, such as artists, who help to make school such a good place to learn.

You told me you work hard and I agree. You get a good education and make good progress. I think it would help some of you to work harder still, particularly in Years 3 and 4, if you had targets in your books to help you see how well you are doing. You have these in Years 1 and 2 and I could see how useful they are, so I have asked your teachers to set them for the rest of you. You can help yourselves by trying hard to meet the targets. I am also asking your teachers to look at how they can help children make the change from Class 1 to Class 2 more easily. As well as this, I am asking your teachers to make sure you all have more time to use computers in your work.

With very best wishes for your future.

Judy Jones Lead inspector



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