

# Ludwell Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126271
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	315465
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Deborah Zachary

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	66
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Jeffery
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lee Chandler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Ludwell Shaftesbury SP7 9ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	01747 828519
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small school serves Ludwell and the surrounding villages. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a little above average.

There have been significant changes of teaching staff since the last inspection: all teachers and the headteacher have started at the school since then.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school is providing a good education for its pupils. Pupils are well taught and as a result are achieving well. The small size of the school is exploited well to create a real family atmosphere, and care, guidance and support for pupils are exceptional. The pupils tremendously enjoy being at the school. Those interviewed in Year 2 spoke of their feelings on getting up in the morning, saying things like, 'We really want to come to school'; a Year 6 pupil summed up the older pupils' views by saying, 'You couldn't improve this school!'

One very clear reason for pupils' enthusiasm is the unique school environment. When a visitor approaches the school the exterior gives no hint of the world within. However, turning inside the porch the visitor can look through 'portholes' on the inner door to a dark blue world with twinkling 'stars'. A somewhat alarming notice states: 'Warning – you are about to enter deep space'. Inside, the corridors have been turned into worlds. Deep space, with the full-size hanging astronaut and 'Tardis', the entrance to a small reading room, gives way to the rainforest area – a green jungle with brightly coloured parrots and animals, and then to an undersea section. Throughout the school, children's imaginations are stimulated by illustrated extracts from books and poems painted on the walls. More work is planned to enhance the good curriculum even further, but the vision is already clear. One parent rightly describes the school as 'a gem on our doorstep'.

The headteacher is the driving force behind this vision and the school's good leadership and management. He has ensured the development of a very successful learning ethos through a time of major staff changes. All the teachers joining the school, except for the headteacher, have also been starting their teaching careers. Thanks to very good support, teaching has steadily improved. Teaching and progress are particularly good in the Foundation Stage. Elsewhere teaching can be more variable – usually good but never less than satisfactory. Monitoring systems are very secure. The school has rightly identified that the only area in which the good progress of pupils is not yet consistent is in mathematics in Years 4 and 5. The current Year 6 pupils, however, have made good progress in mathematics across the four years of Key Stage 2, taken as a whole. Whilst they were a very low-attaining year group at the end of Key Stage 1, their standards in English, mathematics and science are now not far below average.

Pupils' personal development is good. They have a real social maturity and know how to take responsibility for their own learning, thanks to the very good guidance they receive. They take great care of each other, and have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe. They are very clear that there is no bullying, and those spoken to have total confidence that any problems will be sorted out by staff. Much of their cultural development is good. Special themed days that are given over to 'profound learning experiences' make a powerful contribution. However, less attention has been given to preparing pupils to live in a multicultural society.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children are helped to get off to a very good start when the Foundation Stage teacher visits them in their homes before they come to Ludwell. They enter the school with skills that are below the levels expected for their age and achieve well to reach standards that are closer to average by the time they enter Year 1. They settle to routines quickly and receive good teaching within a class that also contains Year 1 pupils. Both teacher and teaching assistant question

children well and use songs and role play very effectively to engage their interest. The classroom is stimulating and there is a well-used outdoor area. There is a good balance between adult-led work and activities which are planned for children to choose from, although the planning for child-led activities does not have such finely tuned objectives.

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

- 
- Increase the rate of pupils' progress in mathematics in Years 4 and 5.
- Raise the quality of all teaching to the level of the best.
- Prepare pupils better for life in multicultural Britain.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards tend to vary from year to year because year groups are very small and pupils enter the school with varying levels of attainment. However, achievement is now improving. The 2007 Key Stage 2 national assessments showed some underachievement in mathematics and science, and by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These areas were rigorously addressed and in the current Year 6 all pupils are achieving well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are achieving well throughout the school. Challenging targets are set for pupils of all abilities, and their progress towards these targets is carefully monitored.

The current Year 2 pupils entered Key Stage 1 with standards that were broadly average, but with a weakness in their writing skills. Their standards are now very high in reading, where they have made excellent progress. They have made good progress in both writing and mathematics, where standards are average and a little above average, respectively.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They eat healthy snacks at break time and grow their own vegetables at the gardening club, some of which have won prizes at village shows. They also contribute to the local carnival and raise money for a range of charities. Within the school they have a strong voice, working through both class and school councils. Close links with the local church support pupils' good spiritual and moral development. They display very good social development in a wide range of ways – through, for example, the buddy work at playtime, their contributions to the new code of conduct and their good behaviour. Although the school does not do as much as it could to broaden pupils' understanding of the range of cultures in Britain, they develop sound basic skills and good social skills to support them in the next stage of education and later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning, both in lessons and through less formal learning experiences around the school. In lessons, teacher-led work is structured well, with varied activities and good use of resources to make lessons interesting. Material is presented in a lively way and at a good pace. The pupils are told what the aim of the lesson is, and this helps

their involvement. However, the age range within some classes is challenging, and material is not always finely tuned enough to fully meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is suitably based on a programme that ensures progression within mixed-age classes. It is enhanced by a broad range of clubs and greatly enriched by the innovative 'profound learning experiences' – whole days spent away from the school by all ages together, once or twice a term. Opportunities for learning beyond the classroom are numerous, because of the superb murals and displays in the different zones around the school. These are interactive and designed to stimulate and inspire – for example, pupils bring in their own toy animals and add them to the rain forest. At this stage the focus has been on creating the areas. They are already being used as resources for lessons in an informal and incidental way, but are not yet consistently planned into the yearly programme of work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Excellent pastoral care is a strength of the school, and pupils are made to feel really valued. Staff are greatly committed to the children's enjoyment and achievement, and safeguarding procedures are rigorous. Parents speak highly of the care and support provided, and pupils themselves say there is always someone whom they could ask for help. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive sensitive and well-planned support, with outside specialists contributing well. Marking is good and particularly strong in writing – comments and suggestions help pupils to focus closely on things they can improve. They also have helpful targets to give them guidance. Even by Year 2, pupils know their targets and are very clear that teachers help them understand how to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Energetic and innovative leadership has been the key to the school's recent improvements, and the school has a good capacity to improve further. The system of subject leadership and monitoring of subject provision is well suited to a small school. Data are used very well to identify specific areas in which improvement in achievement is needed, and effective strategies are deployed. A close focus on linking sounds and letters, for example, has greatly improved reading and writing, and progress in mathematics has been significantly accelerated by creating a small class of able Year 5 and 6 mathematicians for part of the week. Although the strategies are effective, success criteria in the formal improvement plan focus a little too much on standards rather than pupils' progress, and strategies are not always clearly laid out.

Staff work as a close-knit team in this school, with common aims. Governors, too, are highly supportive and committed. The chair of governors is experienced and acts as a critical friend to the headteacher, but many of the governing body are fairly new, and monitoring by governors is not yet fully effective. Most parents are extremely supportive of the school and the leadership, one describing the headteacher as doing 'a phenomenal job'. A small number of questionnaire returns raised concerns about communication issues. The school was already aware of these, had analysed the causes and has already drawn up plans to improve relationships.

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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	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	1
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	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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<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	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 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ludwell Community Primary School, Shaftesbury SP7 9ND

Thank you for welcoming me and my colleague to your school on Wednesday. We really enjoyed the day, especially walking into the deep-space zone when we arrived – though we don't think we met any of the 'alien life forms' the notice warns about. Everybody in the school looks after each other really well – we think the way you are cared for and the way you keep yourselves safe are excellent. We were very impressed by the way you help in the school and in the community outside. You behave well, too, and you get very good guidance on how to improve your work. You told us how much you enjoy yourselves and we are not surprised.

We think you are at a good school and are making good progress in almost every subject. However, we have asked the school to help those of you in Years 4 and 5 to learn a bit more quickly in maths. You can help by trying especially hard in this subject. Your lessons are taught well, but we have also asked the school to improve teaching wherever it is not quite as good, for example, by making sure the work is always right for those of you of different abilities.

We heard a lot about the days when the whole school goes out to learn together, for example, the day when the older ones and some of the teachers tried to attack a castle being defended by the younger ones. We think you gain a lot from days like these. We have asked the school, though, to try and give you more experience of the other cultures that exist in modern Britain.

With best wishes for the future,

Deborah Zachary Lead inspector