

Lickhill Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	135044
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	319601
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Watters HMI

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	167
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Griffiths
Headteacher	Calne Edginton-White
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Almond Way Stourport-on-Severn DY13 8UA
Telephone number	01299 871803
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Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to a change to the report following a complaint

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is located on the eastern edge of Stourport on Severn. It opened in September 2007, following a reorganisation of schools in the Wyre Forest area of Worcestershire. Just after it opened, the governing body received notice from the local authority of its intention to close the school in 2011. The governors have appealed against this decision and are waiting for the outcome of their appeal. Just over a quarter of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational need. Pupil mobility, at 19%, is relatively high. During the first year of opening, 31 pupils either joined or left the school other than at the usual time. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is located in the Reception class. There is onsite childcare provision managed by a private provider, and including after-school care, a holiday club and a breakfast club. The school was the winner of the 2008 BECTA Information and Communication Technology Excellence Award for the Best Whole School: West Midlands.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school has struggled to come to terms with the impact of the local authority (LA) reorganisation of schools, its opening as a primary school in September 2007 and the LA proposal to close the school in 2011. Added to this, changes in staffing and staff responsibilities have contributed further to a period of uncertainty. This has diverted the headteacher and governors from the school's core purpose, which is to ensure at least a satisfactory quality of education for all pupils.

Leaders and managers do not have the drive and authority to move the school forward at a sufficiently speedy rate, without significant external support. The headteacher has far too many curriculum and leadership responsibilities and lacks adequate support at a senior level. The governing body is not carrying out its statutory duties effectively, particularly to check that the pupils are achieving well enough, in relation to their capabilities.

Self-evaluation, the use of assessment information, tracking pupils' progress and monitoring are weak because the school has failed to identify the significant levels of underachievement in Key Stage 2, and to take robust action in eliminating the causes of the underachievement.

Achievement is inadequate. Pupils' progress is too slow in Key Stage 2, and a significant proportion of pupils in each year group underachieve, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, and among the more able pupils. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are generally in line with national expectations but vary considerably throughout Key Stage 2, ranging from above average to well below average, particularly in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Teachers' planning does not take enough account of the pupils' different capabilities and levels of challenge and expectations are too low.

The EYFS provides a good quality of education for the youngest children, and they make good progress. The pupils' personal development and their well-being are satisfactory. Most pupils behave well and some of the pupils are confident and eager to talk about their work, in the EYFS as well as the main school. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion, teaching pupils to show tolerance towards various faiths and ethnic groups, for example in a recent celebration of Hinduism. The 'Lickhill Live' radio project was an effective strategy to engage with the local community. One parent said the project was 'a really good experience for the children and a brilliant community initiative'.

The curriculum is inadequate because the provision and outcomes in literacy and numeracy, for a significant proportion of the pupils in Key Stage 2, are unsatisfactory. There are some exciting opportunities in the curriculum, for example in Information and Communication Technology, where pupils' skills in using new technologies are good.

The quality of care, guidance and support is inadequate. Pupils do not receive enough help in order to improve the quality of their work at a sufficiently fast pace. Many pupils do not know their targets and, when they do, are unsure about how to achieve them. All too often, targets lack sufficient challenge. The parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire are mixed.

Just over a third of the parents responded. Out of these, 72% are positive, with 28% expressing concern about the overall quality of education. One parent said, in support of the school, 'the staff are friendly and approachable, and really make you feel a part of your child's education.' Although there were similar comments to support this view, a significant proportion of parents said that they are unhappy with aspects of the school's performance. The following statement reflects the views of a number of parents: 'I think the security in the school could be better.' Inspectors agree with this. As a result, the school has taken immediate action to improve site security and the quality of supervision at play and lunch times.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children in the EYFS receive a good quality of education in a stimulating, caring and interesting environment. While attainment on entry to the Reception class is generally below what is normally expected for this age group, most children achieve well and make good progress. They achieve particularly well in language and literacy, mathematical calculation and their personal and social development. Children really like being in school, and are happy, secure and safe. Routines are well established. Adults and children enjoy being with each other, and have fun learning. Teachers and adults plan a wide range of exciting activities and use assessment skilfully to help children gain new skills and knowledge. When children choose activities for themselves, they do so sensibly, sharing and cooperating effectively. Good use is made of outdoor spaces to support children's physical and social development. Children are developing a good understanding about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle, for example eating fruit at snack time and keeping fit when exercising at break times. The EYFS is well led and managed and expectations are high. As a result, children behave well, are confident and well prepared for the next stage in their school life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Eliminate underachievement, raise standards and increase rates of progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and for the more able pupils throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, raising expectations and making sure pupils' work is challenging and matched consistently to their different starting points and capabilities.
- Improve the quality of collective leadership and management, which includes senior staff and governors, ensuring a more rigorous approach to monitoring and more effective tracking of pupils' progress; using assessment information rigorously to identify and eliminate the causes of underachievement.
- Ensure a more equitable distribution of roles and responsibilities among senior staff, and evaluate the impact of their work more effectively, in relation to raising achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement is inadequate and too many pupils underachieve, particularly in Key Stage 2. While progress is good in the EYFS and generally satisfactory, although variable, in Key Stage 1, rates of progress between Year 3 and Year 6 are far too slow. Well over half the pupils underachieved in reading and mathematics in Years 3 and 4, and in writing in Years 3, 4 and 6, during the past academic year. There was also underachievement in mathematics in Year 5 and in reading in Year 6. Pupils' books currently reflect poor rates of progress, particularly in writing in Key Stage

2. The higher attaining pupils do not receive sufficient challenge, and are capable of achieving higher standards. While the academic progress of the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is inadequate, they make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their personal and social development. Standards in Key Stage 2 are generally below the levels expected for the pupils' ages, except in information and communication technology (ICT), where they are above average. The outcomes of the 2008 assessments for pupils in Year 2 show that standards are generally in line with the national average. Similarly, the provisional results of the Year 6 national tests also indicate that the proportion of pupils who reached the level expected for their age is broadly in line with the national average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The outcomes for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are generally good. For example, a 'Good Work' assembly, led by a different class each week, helps pupils understand and appreciate each other's views and feelings, and teaches pupils the importance of living together harmoniously. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to express their feelings. Many say they enjoy school, which reflects well in their good attendance. They respect each other and, in most cases, demonstrate kindness, consideration and tolerance. Many work well together and cooperate in class presentations, such as in Year 6 when discussing features of different texts. Behaviour is satisfactory and where there is low-level disruption, this is due to inadequate and weak teaching. Pupils are safety conscious and handle equipment with care. They have a sound understanding of using the internet safely. One pupil said, 'We have been told how to keep safe on the internet' and inspectors observed this during a number of lessons. Pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles although many still choose to bring chocolate bars and crisps for snacks. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing the personal qualities which help them make an effective contribution to the community. For example, Year 6 pupils organise and run the school's Christmas Fayre.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate and as a result, too many pupils are failing to make sufficient progress in relation to their different starting points and capabilities. Expectations are too low, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teachers' lesson planning is weak, because pupils' work does not match their different learning needs well enough. As a result, there is insufficient challenge for the more able pupils, and the lower attaining pupils do not have enough support to help them improve basic skills. In too many lessons, the pace of learning is slow, and pupils become restless and inattentive because the lesson content is not sufficiently exciting and interesting. In satisfactory lessons, pupils make reasonable progress, for example in Year 5, when discussing how an author uses his own life experiences to create fictional characters. Assessment and marking are inadequate. Teachers' comments in pupils' books do not provide enough guidance to help the pupils improve or identify what steps they should take to eliminate weaknesses in their work, particularly in writing. Teachers do not check the pupils' written work carefully enough and there are too many examples where their work is unmarked.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum is inadequate because it fails to meet the needs of too many pupils in English and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2. Medium and short term planning does not take enough account of pupils' different starting points, particularly in the writing curriculum. There is insufficient attention to developing and extending key skills in literacy and numeracy, and rates of progress in these subjects are unsatisfactory. This means that too many pupils are not prepared well enough for the next stages in their education. The provision for ICT is good and this reflects well across the whole school. For example, Year 6 pupils use electronic books to improve their reading and Year 5 pupils use an ICT programme effectively to develop their knowledge and understanding of cams in design and technology. Pupils benefit from a good range of enrichment activities to support the curriculum, including clubs, visits to places of interest and visitors who come in to share their expertise, such as the Earth Caretaker visits in Years 5 and 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Pastoral care for pupils is satisfactory. Most pupils show concern for others and treat each other with respect. They are developing a sound understanding of rights and responsibilities, for example the 'Ginger Bear Time to Talk' initiative and the 'Circle of Friends' providing peer support for each other. Pupils feel confident and trust the adults to help them should problems occur. Pupils are developing an understanding of their own culture and learning to respect differences between various communities. Child protection procedures meet statutory requirements. Risk assessments and medical assessments are robust and reviewed regularly. However, those responsible for leading and managing the school have not been sufficiently diligent in maintaining the security of the school site and adequate supervision at lunch and break times. As a result of this inspection, appropriate action has been taken. Attendance is good and monitored effectively by the school's administrator. Academic guidance is inadequate. Learners do not know their targets well enough, nor have a clear understanding of how they can make progress towards achieving them. Marking is inconsistent and does not provide the pupils with sufficient guidance or challenge.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The quality of the school's collective leadership and management is inadequate because there is insufficient focus on eliminating underachievement and improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the impact of the school's leadership in ensuring a good quality of education for all pupils is unsatisfactory. Systems to monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness lack rigour. Although there is a wealth of information available, there is very little analysis of outcomes leading to decisive action to eliminate weaknesses. Pupils' achievement is tracked satisfactorily, but there is little overview of the different rates of progress in subjects and year groups, and expectations are too low. Consequently, the school has an over-generous view of its performance. Strategic planning is weak because the school development plan does not take enough account of the weaknesses in the school's performance. The role and effectiveness of senior leaders and middle managers in raising achievement are inadequate,

because there has been a failure to identify the degree of underachievement and its causes. Governance is inadequate. The governing body is not keeping a sufficiently watchful eye on the school nor holding staff to account for the standards achieved by the pupils. The school does not provide satisfactory value for money and its capacity to improve is inadequate.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	4

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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 learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lickhill Primary School, Stourport-on-Severn DY13 8UA

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We appreciated the helpful and friendly way you talked with us about the things you enjoy at school, particularly all the equipment for Information and Communication Technology and the opportunities you have to use them. The Lickhill Radio project was successful when you broadcast to the local community. A number of you said that you hope to do this again soon!

Many of you told us that you appreciate the after-school clubs and other activities organised by the school. You generally play and work together well and know that if you have any problems, there is always an adult to help you.

While your school does a lot to make sure you are happy and confident, there are some extremely important things that we have asked the headteacher and the teachers to do better. In order for this to happen, your school will receive some extra help and visits from other inspectors, who will check how well the school is doing to make things better for you all.

These things need to be improved.

- The way that teachers help you to make progress with your work, particularly in your writing, making sure that you all achieve as well as you can.
- The quality of your lessons, to make sure you all have work to do which is interesting and challenging.
- The way in which the headteacher, governors and the other senior teachers check how well you are doing.

You can help by always doing your best and telling your teachers when you do not understand your work or when it is too easy.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Watters

Her Majesty's Inspector