

# Lionel Walden Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110632
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325187
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Godfrey Bancroft

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	231
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	40
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Kevin Robinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Barron
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	High Street Doddington March PE15 0TF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01354 740405
<b>Fax number</b>	01354 741514

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the impact of the school's current drive to raise standards in writing
- the actions the school is taking to raise the number of pupils attaining higher than expected levels
- what the school is doing to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures and faiths in modern Britain
- how the school ensures that pupils are aware of the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve their work.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with governors, the headteacher, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed lessons, playtimes and an assembly. They also analysed the school's assessment data, a range of other documents, including the school's self-evaluation and parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's assessments in those areas, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a primary school of broadly average size. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is low. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and very few speak English as an additional language. Children start at the school with attainment which is close to that expected for their age and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties.

The school holds a variety of awards. These include: the Activemark for sports, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People, the International Education Award and recognition as a Healthy School.

A pre-school group accommodated on the site of the school is managed by the governing body. There is also a breakfast and an after-school club (The Lions' Den) managed by a voluntary committee. These were inspected at the same time as the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that enables pupils to achieve to the best of their abilities, without ever losing sight of the importance of their personal development. This means the school prepares pupils exceptionally well for the next stages of their education and equips them with the skills they will need in later life. The response to the parents' questionnaires reveals that parents and carers are very pleased with the quality of education their children receive. One parent spoke for many when she said, 'We are so lucky, Lionel Walden is a fabulous school.' Another parent was correct when saying, 'There is a strong work ethos throughout the school and the children are always polite and well behaved.'

Very challenging targets are set for pupils' attainment. These targets are invariably met successfully because teachers set work that builds very effectively on pupils' previous learning and tracks their progress carefully. They are also very prompt in responding to the needs of any pupil who shows signs of falling behind. The school's accurate and rigorous assessment procedures show that pupils achieve exceptionally well and make outstanding progress. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and mathematics are above average and standards in writing are well above average. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science have risen again, to well-above-average levels. This picture is affirmed by the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books. Pupils also achieve exceptionally well in a range of other subjects, such as art and design, history, music and physical education. The school's current focus on raising standards in writing is proving to be effective with a larger number of pupils attaining at higher than expected standards than in recent years. A similar picture is also evident in mathematics and science. Success in English is underpinned by the very effective 'Big Write' project, through which the subject leader for English also provides support for other schools. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are also promoted exceptionally well and contribute to the high standards in writing. However, opportunities to extend pupils' learning and develop their thinking through discussion are sometimes missed.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils' enjoyment of school is typified by the comment made by one when he said, 'I like literacy and numeracy best, in fact I love them.' Pupils are clearly inspired by their teachers and excellent relationships between pupils and adults help pupils to become increasingly confident learners. Their attendance is good. The school works very effectively to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures and faiths across the United Kingdom and abroad and its work in this respect is recognised by the International Schools Award. Pupils also make an outstanding contribution to their local community. Behaviour is exceptionally good, with pupils sustaining interest in their learning and exhibiting remarkable maturity when they work independently. Pupils are very knowledgeable about how to stay healthy and safe and the care, guidance and support they receive are outstanding. Measures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements fully. Pupils who have learning difficulties also make exceptional progress and are supported very well.

Teaching and learning are outstanding and the school has a very effective team of teaching assistants who make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers take care to involve pupils in assessing their own learning and making certain they know what to do to make their work even better. Teachers have high expectations to which pupils respond superbly. Pupils are very proud of their achievements and their work, to the extent that the quality of presentation is exceptional. Lessons are typically challenging and are planned in great detail,

meeting the needs of the full range of abilities very well. Careful consideration is given to building on previous learning and meeting the individual needs of each pupil. Even so, there are isolated occasions when the highest attaining pupils are not stretched as much as they might be.

The curriculum is outstanding. While there is a strong focus on promoting English and mathematics, opportunities to develop learning through other subjects and pupils' creativity are not neglected. Pupils are passionate about theme days, when the whole school focuses on a single topic, as typified by the recent science week, with its popular science-homework challenge, enabling parents and their children to work together. Learning is further enhanced by a superb range of additional activities. These include the highly regarded annual productions, in which the superb choir and every pupil take part. The poetry and book club, music ensemble, sign language and sports activities are just some of the well-attended activities arranged out of school hours.

Outstanding leadership and management underpin all this excellent work. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff with additional responsibilities enable everyone to feel valued and contribute as part of the very successful team. There are robust procedures for the school to evaluate its performance accurately and to identify areas where it can build on the existing exceptional practice. Governors are fully involved in these processes. They are knowledgeable about the work of the school and are well placed to hold it to account for the quality of provision it makes. They are also great advocates for the school and work very effectively in partnership with the headteacher to ensure that resources are used wisely and give best value for money. This is exemplified by the thoughtful deployment of teaching assistants and by the excellent work done to improve the quality of accommodation. Further to this, the school has recognised that its outdoor provision would be enhanced by additional playing field area. There is much at Lionel Walden that is worthy of sharing and the quality of the work of the headteacher in providing guidance and support for other schools is widely acknowledged.

The issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed successfully and improvement since that time is outstanding. The school's track record of improving above average standards to well above average and building on its existing strengths means its capacity to sustain improvement is also outstanding.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The well-organised pre-school play group helps children to make exceedingly good progress, especially in their social and communication skills. This enables them to make an excellent start in achieving the early learning goals for their age. The strong partnership between the play group and the Reception class provides children, and their parents and carers, with an excellent induction programme. As a result children settle quickly into safe and secure routines which are fostered by the high-quality teaching, care and support they receive from staff. Children of all abilities make excellent progress, and by the time they leave the Reception class they achieve above the national average in all areas of early learning. Achievement is particularly good in their personal development and in mathematical skills. Children quickly gain confidence and show great enjoyment in learning and developing new skills. Behaviour is excellent and from an early age children are keen to be involved. The manner in which they respond to each other and share resources is commendable. Language and counting skills are a major part of everyday learning and often involve children working together to solve problems. The leadership and management are outstanding with strong teamwork to ensure that the needs of all children

are met through prompt intervention and additional learning programmes where necessary. Resources are used imaginatively to provide an exciting range of learning activities. The outside play space is at present good and used well as a learning resource to support the areas of learning. Nevertheless, further improvements to this aspect of provision are imminent.

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

- Focus even more precisely on providing activities that consistently challenge the most able pupils.
- Capitalise on opportunities to extend pupils' thinking and analytical skills through discussion.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

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

19 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lionel Walden Primary School, Doddington, PE15 0TF

You may recall I visited recently with another inspector to inspect your school. We would like to thank you for talking to us about your school and telling us how much you enjoy the activities. Many of you and your parents and carers told us you think your school is superb and we agree.

The excellent pre-school group and Reception class give you all a really good start to your education. As you move up the school many of you make exceptional progress, to the extent that by the time you are in Year 6 and ready to move onto another school the standards you attain are much higher than in most schools. This is because you all work very hard and receive all the help you need from your teachers and from teaching assistants. They make learning at Lionel Walden exciting and inspire you to do your best. If we mentioned all the things at Lionel Walden that impressed us this letter would be twice as long. Listening to the choir was a great delight, you sing beautifully. The work in your books is some of the neatest I have seen anywhere. The mature and thoughtful way in which you answer questions is very impressive.

Finally, Mr Barron and the governors do an excellent job, making sure you have everything you need to learn successfully and they are constantly looking for ways to make your school even better. They are eager to maintain the high quality of education. With that in mind we have asked them to make sure that even the most able amongst you constantly have work that challenges you and makes you think. As part of doing this we would like your teachers to take every opportunity to involve you in discussions so that you become even better at listening to and learning from each other.

Wishing you every success in the future,

Godfrey V Bancroft

Lead inspector