

Longstone CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112887
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325711
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Aldridge

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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	162
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	Mrs Jean Gledhill
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Martlew
Date of previous school inspection	28 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Cross Great Longstone Bakewell Derbyshire DE45 1TZ
Telephone number	01629 640377
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Longstone CofE Primary School serves the villages of Little and Great Longstone and their wider rural communities. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few are eligible for free school meals. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the Reception Year with skills and knowledge generally above that expected at their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low for a school of this size. The school provides care for 45 minutes before and after the school day. The previous headteacher left in July 2008 and a senior teacher is currently acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Longstone CofE Primary is a good school, which is how it accurately evaluates itself. It is deservedly popular with parents who are pleased with what it provides for their children. One summed up the views of many by remarking that its great strength is 'the way that it nurtures and celebrates individual achievements whilst promoting a strong sense of team spirit and caring for others'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, where they feel safe and secure. Relationships amongst all members of the school's community are good. Governors and parents are strongly supportive of the school and the 'friends' organisation raises considerable funds which are used effectively to provide additional, enjoyable experiences for pupils.

Pupils achieve well. From what are most often good starting points on entry they reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are generally well above average by Year 6, indicating that they make good progress in their time at the school. This applies to all groups of pupils, as any who occasionally experience difficulties in learning are well supported in overcoming these. Good progress is linked to the good quality of teaching and the positive attitudes that pupils have to learning. High standards are also achieved in music, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE). This is the result of specialist teaching in these subjects but also to the excellent enrichment in music and PE. There are many and varied opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments and to take part in sporting activities including competitions. ICT is used well as a learning tool across the curriculum and subjects provide meaningful contexts in which pupils acquire ICT skills. The good academic progress that pupils make and their ability to work constructively with others equip them well for secondary schooling.

Children in the EYFS get a good start to their schooling as the provision is good. Since the last inspection the school has developed an outdoor learning area with some cover. However, this is small and does not provide sufficient space for staff to set out a wide range of activities outside from which children can choose, particularly activities that encourage physical development, such as climbing and using tricycles. Although children's knowledge and skills by the end of the Reception Year compare favourably with those of children nationally, the school is not able to judge whether children make equally good progress in all areas of learning as it does not measure this.

Pupils' personal development is good. The many opportunities for recognition give pupils self-confidence. They are friendly and show respect for adults and one another. Pupils learn effectively to care for one another and to empathise with those less fortunate than they are. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community. Although they learn about the customs and cultures of others, there are few opportunities for them to mix with and work alongside those of different races, religions and socio-economic circumstances. This reduces their opportunities to understand and value diversity in society.

The acting headteacher is leading the school well whilst the governors are recruiting a new headteacher. Staff have all 'raised their game' to take on some additional responsibilities during this period. A number of positive changes have been made and parents and governors appreciate the work that is being done. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve because its self-evaluation is good and there is a clear plan for development.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The EYFS provision is well led and managed. Good links with parents and the local playgroup ensure that children settle quickly. The children are well cared for so that they are happy and secure in school. Good teaching ensures that they make good progress and many exceed the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Although staff use the Foundation Stage Profile to check children's progress and performance, a different assessment tool is used to measure skills and knowledge on entry. As a result, the school does not have a reliable means of measuring the progress children make in each area of learning. Children respond well to the high expectations demonstrated during teacher-led sessions. They are well prepared for more formal learning and this contributes to children's good progress in basic skills. Whilst there are satisfactory opportunities for children to learn through play, these are limited by the lack of space for outdoor learning, particularly in physical development. Nonetheless, children have plenty of physical activity indoors and out. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They benefit from the positive atmosphere and good enrichment of the curriculum in school as well as the good role models provided by older pupils. There are good arrangements for their general health, safety and well-being. By the end of Reception they are well prepared for the next step of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to mix with and work alongside those from different races, religions and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Improve the provision for the EYFS by:
 - providing more outdoor space for teaching and learning where children can choose from a range of activities, particularly those that encourage physical development.
 - Measuring the progress that children make in all areas of learning and using this to evaluate the impact of provision.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the school are consistently high and the current Year 6 are on track to achieve the challenging targets set for them. In the last few years, standards have been above average overall by Year 2 and well above average in writing. In Year 6, standards have been well above average in most recent years. Whilst the 2008 results have yet to be confirmed, Year 6 pupils reached well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. They entered Year 3 with above average standards showing that they made good progress. Assessment information shows that standards are high now and that pupils are making good progress. Good achievement is associated with high expectations, good teaching and support. Importantly, pupils are well motivated and keen to do well. Good provision for PE, ICT and music results in high standards. Many pupils become skilled musicians and the school has its own orchestra. The school's teams are successful in sporting competitions and recently won the county indoor athletics championship.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupil's spiritual, moral and social development is good. Behaviour is good and so is attendance. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school because as one said, 'The teachers are nice and do fun things.' Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and are pleased to help each other in school and in the playground. They enjoy having responsibilities, including being playground buddies and members of the school council. Although pupils have a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and take plenty of physical exercise, they do not always eat and drink healthily at school. They are well aware of how to keep themselves safe. The school is a harmonious community and pupils know that bullying is wrong and what to do if it occurs. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and the local community, such as when they entertain elderly members of the community by playing music. However, their knowledge and understanding of other backgrounds and cultures is less well developed. Their good personal development and good academic achievement prepares them well for the next step in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good relationships between staff and pupils result in pupils being confident learners. They are keen to answer questions and help one another and themselves, by using dictionaries to find correct spellings, for instance. Teachers plan appealing tasks and use their thorough knowledge of pupils to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' ages and abilities. In general, support staff are well deployed to support learning but occasionally their skills are not used effectively throughout lessons. Pupils know what they are learning about because teachers explain this clearly. Teachers develop independent learning well when they provide prompts for pupils so that they can get along at their own pace, check their work and evaluate it when they have finished. Pupils are given suitable praise and good encouragement, and marking is satisfactory.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets requirements and planning allows for all in the mixed-age classes to continue to progress. Provision to develop pupils' basic skills is effective. Suitable small group support gives those who need extra support an added boost. Enrichment of the curriculum is particularly good. Opportunities to participate and shine in music and sports are excellent. There is a good take-up of the range of clubs offered at lunchtime and after school. The outside visits and visitors to the school add much to pupils' experiences and bring learning to life. A visiting planetarium during the inspection generated much enthusiasm and interest. The improved provision in ICT is well utilised in all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and their welfare are firmly in place, as are procedures for child protection. Parents appreciate the before and after school clubs which provide good care for pupils. Pupils trust the adults in school and know they will listen to them

and support them if they have a difficulty. Pupils' attainment and progress is kept under regular review. This has recently been strengthened by the introduction of pupil tracking grids. Termly meetings are held to identify pupils who need support, including those who find learning difficult and the gifted and talented. Pupils are given good oral feedback and know what they are good at but they are not always clear about what they need to do to improve. A strong feature of the school is that all share in celebrating achievements so pupils feel valued and successful.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Staff work effectively together under the good leadership of the acting headteacher. Appreciative parents recognise that staff are prepared to 'go the extra mile' for the good of the pupils and the school. Subject leaders have improved the extent to which they are involved in monitoring and evaluation since the last inspection so they make a good contribution to improvement. Good self-evaluation enables the staff to identify the strengths and most areas for improvement, although this is less well developed in the EYFS. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Whilst there are some good features, such as its links with the local community, including the church and parents, there is little to encourage pupils to value diversity through contact with different groups of people. Governance is good. The governors are most supportive and several are frequent visitors to the school. They successfully balance the budget and target resources to areas of greatest need, such as providing additional support staffing in larger classes. They keep the school's work under review and have recently developed a means of checking that the curriculum meets requirements.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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

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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

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

21 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longstone Primary School, Great Longstone, DE45 1TZ

Thank you for making us welcome in your school. We enjoyed our visit, the purpose of which was to find out how good the school is and whether there are any ways in which it could become even better.

We agree that yours is a good school. We were impressed by the atmosphere in the school, especially the way that everyone gets along so well together. Your parents are pleased with the school too. You are all making good progress and reach high standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT by the time you leave. This helps to prepare you well for secondary school. Your achievements in music and sports are also impressive. Good teaching and support help you to get on as well as you do and so does the fact that you are keen to learn and do well. The staff provide interesting and enjoyable experiences in lessons as well as a good range of activities at lunchtime and after school.

You are all developing well as young people too. There are many occasions when your achievements are recognised and celebrated so that you rightly feel proud of yourselves. You behave well and care for one another so your school is a place where all feel safe. You certainly take plenty of physical exercise and are often successful in sporting competitions. You take responsibilities seriously when you represent others on the school council or act as buddies in the playground.

There are three things that the staff are going to do to help improve the school even further. They are going to create more space outdoors for children in Reception to use during lesson time, so that they can choose between several different activities. They are also going to measure the progress that children make each year. They are going to find a way of giving you regular opportunities to meet and work with people of different races, religions and circumstances. You can contribute to school improvement by keeping up the good work and helping Longstone Primary to become a Healthy School by eating healthily at school and drinking water regularly during the school day.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Aldridge

Lead inspector