

Longlands Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117326
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	326576
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Grainger

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	193
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	Mr John Orgar
Headteacher	Mrs Lee-Ann Britten
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Nunsbury Drive Turnford Broxbourne Hertfordshire EN10 6AG

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2009
Inspection number	326576

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

About three quarters of pupils are of White British backgrounds. A few from minority ethnic backgrounds have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average overall, although high in some year groups. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Children of Nursery and Reception age are taught in an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) unit. Nursery children attend during the mornings only. The governing body offers before-and-after-school care for children attending this school. The present headteacher and deputy headteacher have had responsibility for the school since September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. There are significant strengths in the care, guidance and support provided for pupils and in the promotion of their personal development and well-being. Many parents comment positively on their children's enjoyment of school and on the good standards of behaviour. As one parent pointed out, the school has 'a lovely, friendly feel'. Another observed that, 'It is pleasing to see the headteacher on the playground in the mornings talking to parents and welcoming children to school'. Relationships among pupils and between staff and pupils are good. As a result, pupils feel safe at school and have good attitudes in lessons. Pupils know how to stay safe and have a strong awareness of how to keep fit and healthy. They respond enthusiastically, for example, to the good opportunities for involvement in sport and physical exercise.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Taking each year group as a whole, attainment on entry varies. In some years, children's starting points in the Nursery are broadly at the level expected and in other years they are below expectations. Pupils' satisfactory progress throughout the school maintains standards at these levels. Currently, standards are below average in Year 6, the pupils having started in Year 3 with below average standards. The school recognises that pupils' progress has to accelerate if standards are to rise across the school.

There are two main reasons why pupils' progress is satisfactory and no better. Firstly, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are good features to teaching in all year groups, such as the efficient way in which lessons are organised. However, teaching is not always closely matched to all pupils' learning needs. This limits the pace at which the more able pupils in particular can move on. Secondly, the curriculum is satisfactory. As with teaching, there are good aspects to the curriculum. In particular, interesting links are developing between subjects in Years 1 and 2 that are making learning more exciting and purposeful. However, not all time available for the curriculum in the school day is used adequately to promote learning. For example, there are breaks for snacks for pupils of all ages in addition to ordinary break times. Time is also wasted when older pupils move between classrooms. Over a week this adds up to a significant loss of time for learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction and is soundly supported by the deputy headteacher. All staff are committed to improving the school. They recognise that they are accountable for how well pupils are doing and are responding positively to new initiatives. Recent developments, such as improved identification of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and better tracking of pupils' progress, show that the school has sound capacity for improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school know what areas it needs to work on next. Even so, the present evaluation of the impact of provision, particularly teaching, on pupils' achievement is not rigorous enough to drive improvement at a good pace. Not all action for improvement identified as necessary is taken swiftly enough.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children settle well in the Nursery where the school's good attention to pupils' welfare begins. As one parent of a Nursery child said, 'We could not be more happy with how well our daughter has settled.' Positive relationships are promoted well and good attention is given to children's

personal development. As a result, children behave well, take turns and share. They are confident in their classroom, sit sensibly and pay good attention to adults when gathered together on the carpet.

Children make steady progress as a result of satisfactory teaching that promotes all areas of learning appropriately. Last year's Reception children transferred to Year 1 with broadly average standards. The present Reception children are on course to reach similar standards. Children benefit from focused adult-led activities that develop skills such as in linking sounds with letters and in counting. Adults are deployed appropriately to work with different ability groups, helping to match teaching to children's needs. There are occasions, however, when activities do not challenge the more able children. There are also some missed opportunities to move learning on when adults interact with children who are playing or involved in activities they have selected.

Leadership and management of the EYFS provision are satisfactory. A few parents expressed concern that some recent unsettled staffing may have disrupted their children's learning. Inspectors found that this is not the case and that children's progress is being maintained.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise the standards they attain.
- Ensure that teaching is always closely matched to all pupils' needs, in particular to challenge the more able pupils fully.
- Make full use of all the time available for the curriculum to promote learning.
- More rigorously evaluate the impact of provision, particularly teaching, on pupils' progress and take swift action for improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Building on their start in the Nursery and Reception, pupils continue to make steady progress in Years 1 and 2. In 2008, assessment results in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average at the end of Year 2, representing satisfactory achievement for these pupils. Standards have been below average at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science in recent years. Standards are still below average now in Year 6 but the pupils have made satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 3.

The school acknowledges that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly boys, have not made consistent gains in the past. Effective action has been taken to improve this so that these pupils are now progressing satisfactorily. However, all groups of pupils, including the more able, are not consistently challenged to make the good progress necessary to raise standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The social and moral aspects of pupils' personal development are significant strengths. This is evident in the high standards of behaviour, positive relationships and pupils' good response in lessons. The school is a harmonious community in which older pupils care well for younger

ones. Pupils enjoy school considerably and speak enthusiastically about the way teachers support them with their work and personal problems. They respond particularly well to opportunities to be actively involved in lessons, such as in art and when handling artefacts in history. Their enthusiastic participation in sporting activities contributes much to their good adoption of healthy lifestyles. Good enjoyment is reflected in the regular attendance of the vast majority of pupils.

Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community. There are good features such as in their efforts to raise funds for charities. A relatively weaker, although satisfactory, aspect of pupils' personal development is their understanding of the rich diversity of modern multi-ethnic Britain. All in all, pupils' good personal attributes, together with their reasonable academic progress, prepare them satisfactorily for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The overall impact of teaching on pupils' progress is satisfactory, although good features are evident across the school. Lessons are well organised, with activities building on each other as each lesson progresses. Pupils are told the purpose of the lesson so that they know what they are aiming to achieve. Teaching assistants are often used well to support pupils with learning difficulties. Satisfactory support is provided in lessons for pupils with English as an additional language.

The main reason why teaching supports only satisfactory progress is that it is not closely enough matched to all pupils' needs. This means that the more able pupils in particular are not always meeting their full potential. This can happen when an activity is not challenging enough for all or when too much time is allocated to it. It also happens when adults miss opportunities to add the extra challenge or support that individuals or groups need, for example, by asking a probing question of pupils as they work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' progress. In particular, its impact is limited by not all time available being used well enough, resulting in missed opportunities for pupils to be engaged in learning. Good links are developing between subjects in Years 1 and 2 that add enjoyment and meaning to learning. The school is looking to extend these links to Years 3 to 6 in order to make learning more exciting and relevant. Specific provision for more able pupils and those with particular gifts and talents is at an early stage of development.

A reasonable range of visits, visitors and clubs enhances the day-by-day curriculum. These activities, together with provision for personal, social and health education, make an effective contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is good and the school knows the personal needs of its pupils well. As a result, pupils are confident in reporting any worries or concerns to an adult in school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are rigorous. Good care is provided for pupils who are unwell. All staff

provide positive role models for behaviour towards others. A parent told inspectors about the good way in which the school works closely with parents to help pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. She said that regular meetings to support her child are based on trust and good relationships. Pupils attending the before and after school clubs are well looked after.

Much has been done recently to develop systems for tracking pupils' progress and providing them with clear academic guidance. As a result, pupils who might be falling behind are now identified and extra support is provided. There are examples of good guidance through targets and marking that tell pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. While not less than satisfactory in any class, academic guidance is neither as strong nor as consistent as the pastoral care. This is an area that the school is continuing to work on.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has accurately evaluated how well the school contributes to pupils' progress. Satisfactory action has been taken in response to this evaluation. For example, there is now a consistent approach across classes to sharing lesson objectives with pupils. Action is being taken to improve the relevance of the curriculum to all pupils' needs and interests. The school recognises that in order to improve its satisfactory promotion of community cohesion, it should provide pupils with greater insight into the diversity of modern multi-ethnic society. Some initial steps are being taken towards this.

The deputy headteacher works well in partnership with the headteacher. Other staff are clear about the most important areas for improvement. This is resulting in a common purpose and satisfactory pace of change. Many staff are new to their areas of responsibility, such as subject leadership, and these roles are developing at an acceptable pace. Governors also know the school's main strengths and weaknesses and are satisfactorily supporting the school's development. Currently, leadership and management ensure that the school has a satisfactory effectiveness. However, the rigour of evaluation and the pace of improvement are not sufficient to ensure that the school moves on quickly to become good.

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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?	3
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	3
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
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

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

22 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longlands Primary School and Nursery, Broxbourne, EN10 6AG

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you, visiting your lessons and looking at your work. We saw that you are happy in school, behave well, and get on well with each other. You know a lot about how to keep fit and healthy and how to stay safe. You told us that the adults look after you well and that you can go to them if you have any worries or concerns. You are lucky to have some interesting activities in addition to your daily lessons, particularly in sport.

We found that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. You make satisfactory progress during your time in the school. There are some good features to the teaching and the range of activities in lessons but there are also some aspects that we have asked the school to improve. These are the things that we have asked the school to do.

- Speed up your progress so that you can reach higher standards.
- Ensure that all teaching is closely matched to all your needs.
- Make full use of all the time that is available to help you to learn.
- More thoroughly check up on how well the school is helping you to learn. Then, make sure that changes to help you learn better are always made quickly enough.

All the adults in school are keen to keep improving the school so that you get the most you can out of being there. You can help by always doing your best. Thank you once again for your help.

Yours faithfully

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector