

Thurnby, St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 120166 |
| Local Authority | Leicestershire |
| Inspection number | 327215 |
| Inspection date | 16 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Paul Edwards |

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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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–10 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 216 |
| 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 | Silvia Bosworth |
| Headteacher | Jatinder Sembi |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 June 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Main Street Thurnby Leicester LE7 9PN |
| Telephone number | 01162 415105 |

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| Age group | 4–10 |
| Inspection date | 16 June 2009 |
| Inspection number | 327215 |

Fax number

01162 415105

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Introduction

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

- Whether children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making sufficient progress.
- The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly in their writing.
- The teachers' use of assessment information when planning work for their pupils.
- Pupils' understanding of different cultures, religions and backgrounds.

Evidence was gathered from visiting lessons, sampling pupils' work, observing pupils at work and at play; discussions with pupils, staff and governors; and analyses of the school's documentation, assessment information and responses to the parent questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Thurnby, St Luke's is average in size. Almost 40% of its pupils are from outside its catchment area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 5.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in either a Reception class or a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Privately operated pre-school provision takes place on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Through the effective leadership of the headteacher and senior staff, the school has overcome a number of staffing difficulties and pupils now make good progress in all year groups. The overwhelming majority of parents think highly of the school and their views are typified by the following comment: 'My child has thoroughly enjoyed his time at St Luke's school. He will be leaving having grown into a caring, confident and polite child which I believe is due to St Luke's school.'

Children enter the school with skills and abilities at similar levels to those expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Reception class and achieve well throughout the school. In the national assessments for Year 2, standards have been above average for the past three years. By the end of Year 5, standards are also above average overall, although standards in writing are not as high as in reading, mathematics and science. Handwriting and presentation skills, areas for improvement identified in the last inspection, have been addressed well, but whilst pupils' formal writing skills during literacy lessons are good, they do not always transfer to other areas of the curriculum. The school has rightly identified that there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good and occasionally better progress because of the excellent support and guidance provided by the special educational needs coordinator.

Teaching and learning are good, and consequently pupils make good progress. Teachers' high expectations and consistent approach are strong factors in ensuring pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. Lessons are generally interesting and well planned so pupils enjoy their learning. Teachers explain the work carefully and question pupils effectively to ensure their understanding. Work is marked regularly and systematically. However, although there is some very good practice in the school, teachers do not always identify how the pupils might improve their writing skills or ensure that they respond to their teachers' comments. The otherwise satisfactory curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and clubs that add considerable interest. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the many musical opportunities and taking part in the 'dance mats' competition.

The strong programme of personal, social and health education and the wide range of sporting activities promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy the lunchtime 'huff and puff' sessions, both as leaders and participants. They have a very good understanding of what they should eat to stay healthy and many say they do try to follow the guidance. Parents appreciate the way staff give so freely of their time to provide and support numerous after-school activities which enhance learning. Pupils acknowledge that their views are valued and know that they make a valuable contribution to school improvement. There are good opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility and the 'Eco Warriors' talk proudly of their future plans for the school grounds. Older pupils take care of the younger children and the school council is 'urging' the leadership to take note of its request for the toilet redecoration!

Parents support the inspectors' judgement that the quality of care, guidance and support is good. They say that the school puts their children first, and are appreciative of the support provided for those who need extra help. They are particularly pleased with the regular 'booster classes' that have been initiated to help accelerate the progress of some older pupils. The skilled support staff are well deployed and the school seeks help from other professionals where needed. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with

a statement of special educational needs, achieve at least as well as their classmates. Pupils have a real 'voice' in the school. They work and play in a warm, supportive learning environment where they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They state confidently that staff will always help them should they have any concerns at all. At the time of the inspection, all the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils were fully in place. There are very good systems to assess and track pupils' progress and to provide additional help where needed at an early stage. Pupils have a good understanding of their own targets for improvement and work hard to achieve them. They are proud when they achieve a target and are keen to move on to the next level.

Leadership and management are good. The school's leaders have evaluated its effectiveness well and have identified very clear priorities for further improvement. The headteacher is supported very effectively by the senior management team and, together, they have made some significant improvements. Teaching and learning are improving, the Early Years Foundation Stage provision is much stronger and the tracking of pupils' progress is much more rigorous, enabling underachievement to be addressed effectively. The school monitors and evaluates its work carefully and accurately to plan improvements. Strategies to improve writing have begun to raise standards in Key Stage 2, but there is a little way to go to ensure standards in this aspect are as good as in other areas. Governance is good. Governors have a good understanding of the needs of the school and are supportive and effective in bringing about improvements, for example in improving the accommodation.

Community cohesion is satisfactory. There are good links with the church and the local community. The choir performs at local events and pupils are very involved in raising funds for local and international charities. The school has developed beneficial links with a school in The Gambia and pupils' studies of different cultures in countries, such as India provide them with a good international perspective. However, their understanding of the different cultural, religious and social backgrounds of people in this country is underdeveloped and the school has yet to fully evaluate its programme to determine how this might be improved.

Improvements since the last inspection, the way the leadership has tackled staffing difficulties to raise the quality of teaching and the effective current focus on raising standards indicate that the school is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The school successfully builds on the range of skills children bring to the school so that they make good progress in the Reception class, and standards are above average by the time they enter Year 1.

The high priority placed on personal, social and emotional development promotes good outcomes for each individual child. Children enjoy coming to school because of the interesting range of activities on offer. They develop a good understanding of keeping healthy; adults are good role models and join them for fruit snacks and encourage them to enjoy regular exercise. The children know how to keep safe and respond well to the regular reminders to wash their hands before eating. They make a very good contribution to the school community as they listen to others with respect, put up their hands and tidy away equipment they have used. Children work well together even when not directly supervised as, for example, when they were visiting the 'vets' where they take turns in the various roles. Their good basic skills and the confidence to try hard prepare them well for Year 1.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Teaching is good; it comprises a good range of purposeful, practical activities that engage children's interest. Adults explain activities clearly and provide good opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves. Children enjoy using the interesting outdoor area, although the teachers' planning does not ensure the best use is made of the facility to extend their learning further. There are good systems for assessing children's learning through direct observation and the information is used well to plan work for different groups. Every effort is made to involve parents in children's learning. The introduction of the 'learning journeys' is providing both staff and parents with a clear picture of how well their children are progressing. There are good arrangements for introducing children to school before they start in Reception. Parents report that this helps children to settle quickly and develop good attitudes to learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teachers' marking, particularly in writing, so that it identifies clearly how the pupils can improve their work.
- Provide greater opportunities for the pupils to practise and develop their writing skills in different areas of the curriculum.
- Ensure the programme for community cohesion is thoroughly evaluated so the school can plan effectively to ensure pupils gain a greater understanding of the social and cultural differences of people in this country.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 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

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| 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? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

Leadership and management

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| 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

17 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thurnby, St Luke's C of E Primary School, Leicester, LE7 9PN

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed watching you in lessons and hearing what you think about your school. We agree with you and your parents that it is a good school and that you are well looked after. We were impressed by your good behaviour and your enthusiasm for lessons and the many activities that make learning so interesting for you.

Teaching is good and you work hard so you make good progress. You reach standards that are generally higher than those seen in most schools, although we think you need more opportunities to practise your writing in other subjects so that you can do even better in your writing. The school takes good care of you all. Adults are always there to give extra help to those who need it. Teachers mark your work carefully, although we have asked them to tell you more about how you might improve your writing. You told us that you enjoy achieving your targets and are proud when you reach the next level.

We are pleased that you enjoy learning about what it is like to live in other countries such as The Gambia and India. We have asked the school to help you find out a little more about the different cultures and backgrounds of people in this country. You have good opportunities to take responsibility and we enjoyed finding out about the 'Eco Warriors'.

We wish you every success with your writing and we hope you continue to work hard and enjoy learning so much.

Yours faithfully

Mr Paul Edwards

Lead inspector