

# Littleton Green Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124088
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328048
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Brian Holmes

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	254
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Debbie Round
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynn Small
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2007
<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>	Stafford Road Huntington Cannock WS12 4PD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 510260
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 510263

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Littleton Green is an average-sized primary school on two sites. It has Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children of Nursery and Reception age in single year group classes in two separate buildings. The vast majority of pupils are from White British families. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school is due to move into new premises in October 2009. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was absent from school on maternity leave and the school was being led by the deputy headteacher.

The school has gained the Active Mark and the Investors in People Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Since the previous inspection, pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 have fallen and are now below average, although pupils' progress across the school is satisfactory from their different points on entry to the school. The school has coped with enforced changes in the leadership of the school, because of the headteacher's absence and significant changes in staffing. The acting headteacher has led the school appropriately to maintain a satisfactory quality of teaching and learning and provision. Pupils are positive about the school, as are the few parents who expressed their views. Both parents and pupils appreciate the 'friendliness and approachability' of the staff and the good levels of care, guidance and support the school provides for pupils.

Children start school with skills and abilities below those expected for their age, although this varies from year to year. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, they make satisfactory progress towards the goals expected. A good transition of learning for children into Year 1 enables progress to accelerate, although this improvement is recent. Sound progress continues in Year 2 but standards remain below average. In Years 3 and 4, progress is slower because learning has been affected by changes in staffing. In Years 5 and 6, although progress accelerates, standards remain below average by the end of Year 6.

The most effective teaching and learning are in Years 1, 2 and 5. In these classes, pupils experience a consistently good pace of learning through well-planned and interesting activities which engage and motivate them. In classes where teaching and learning are satisfactory, learning does not always build on what pupils already know and pupils are not always clear about what they are expected to do in the activities they are set. There are indications that teaching and learning are beginning to improve through marking which identifies for pupils what the next steps in their learning are. Pupils know their targets and have a good understanding of how to achieve them. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs of most pupils. However, a recent initiative to improve links between subjects so that pupils have more opportunities to use their reading, writing and mathematics skills in all subjects is not yet being consistently used in all classes to improve achievement.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior leaders have correctly identified the school's areas of weakness and have taken appropriate action to address them. The system of assessment has been changed to give more accurate information about pupils' progress and the school has worked hard with all staff to improve the accuracy of assessments. Senior leaders are developing effective processes to evaluate the school's work but middle leaders are not having enough effect on improving standards in their areas of responsibility.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and their clear enjoyment of school is seen in their good behaviour and their good relationships with each other and the adults around them. They describe the school as 'a friendly place'. They like their learning and describe the range of additional activities as 'brilliant'. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to live healthily, choosing fruit instead of pudding at lunchtime and understanding the effect that regular exercise has on their bodies. They feel very safe around school and are clear that bullying is rare and that when it does occur, it is dealt with quickly by the adults in school. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility and be involved in the life of the school and the community. The school council were involved in establishing the 'playground buddies' scheme where older pupils look after younger ones. Pupils link closely with the local community, taking

part in church events, visiting the local old people's home and welcoming parents into school for school plays and sports events. Pupils' preparation for their future economic well-being is satisfactory because of their satisfactory achievement. Pupils appreciate how their learning is preparing them for the next stage of their education, describing the skills they acquire as 'real life skills, like learning to add up for shopping, in maths lessons'.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. By the end of Reception, children have made satisfactory progress but are still below the levels expected. However, there are indications that progress is improving. Achievement in reading has improved through a clear focus on letters and sounds. Parents are pleased with the start their children make at the school, and procedures to enable children to settle quickly when they join the Nursery are effective. Adults provide good levels of care and ensure that children feel safe and secure. This enables children to form good relationships with each other and the adults around them, resulting in good behaviour and good personal development. Children share equipment and work together well, becoming increasingly confident. They have good opportunities to take responsibility, for example giving out fruit at break and equipment for lessons.

There is good use of the indoor and outdoor areas, in both the Nursery and Reception classes, to provide stimulating and interesting exploratory activities. Adult-led sessions are well focused on improving children's speaking and listening skills. However, although there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning, independent activities are not sufficiently structured to challenge children to achieve the next stage in their learning. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The formal analysis of children's attainment on entry to the Nursery has only been introduced this year. Assessment is thorough and builds a picture of how well children are doing, but the information gained is not used sufficiently well in teachers' planning to identify the next steps in learning.

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

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics, in line with national averages, by embedding recent initiatives in the curriculum and assessment so that pupils in all year groups make consistent progress towards their targets.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to be consistently good in all classes by building on what pupils already know and making expectations of activities clear.
- Improve the effectiveness of middle leaders in analysing and improving provision in order to raise standards of achievement. A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Across the school as a whole, pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average in both English and mathematics. Pupils make satisfactory progress from their different starting points. Their rates of progress vary between year groups, particularly in Key Stage 2. Recent initiatives to improve achievement through the curriculum are not yet having enough effect in all classes. Where teaching and learning is more effective, pupils' progress accelerates and their standards improve, for example in Years 1, 2 and 5. Pupils

with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because of the support they receive for their learning. They make good progress in their reading.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are given good opportunities to reflect in assemblies and in circle time. Their good moral and social development is seen in their positive behaviour in lessons and during wet playtimes. Attendance is satisfactory and improving steadily. The school has succeeded in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Pupils contribute to the school in a number of different ways. They have been involved in helping to design the new school building and, through the school council, pupils made requests for new playground equipment. Pupils have a satisfactory cultural awareness through their understanding of other cultures and faiths, but their knowledge of the multi-ethnicity within other parts of the United Kingdom is relatively underdeveloped. The school council are involved in an initiative with schools in other communities, 'Being Different, Belonging Together', but this is recent and has not yet had a positive effect on the awareness of all pupils.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers enjoy good relationships with pupils and manage them well. Pupils say that their lessons are fun. Learning objectives are usually made clear to pupils and teachers use an appropriate range of approaches to capture pupils' interest, for example 'talk' partners or working in small groups on a 'carousel' of activities. These strategies engage pupils in their learning and they are keen to contribute their ideas in discussions and to be involved in lessons. However, when the pace of learning slows, it is because teaching does not build effectively on what pupils already know and understand and because expectations of what pupils need to do to complete their activities successfully are not made clear. In lessons where there is a good sustained pace of learning, pupils are highly motivated, but this is not the case in all classes. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support the learning needs of pupils, including learners with difficulties and/or disabilities. Marking has improved and is consistent, giving pupils clear guidance on what to do next to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily. Recent initiatives to improve the curriculum have had some effect on improving achievement. The effective of transition of learning for pupils in Year 1 from the Early Years Foundation Stage has resulted in accelerated progress by these pupils. However, the 'connected learning' initiative has had a more varied effect. There is clear evidence that pupils are being given increased opportunities to use their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. Where these links are made clear to pupils, there is a positive effect on their learning. However, these links are not consistently applied in all classes. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education which has a positive effect on pupils' personal development and well-being. The school makes good provision to enrich pupils' learning through additional activities, such as work in French to

develop pupils' understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the extra clubs, which are well attended, particularly those focused on sport and information and communication technology.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care and safety of pupils is at the heart of the school's work. All adults are committed to ensuring pupils' safety, as seen in the additional training they have undertaken on road safety because the school is close to a major trunk road. Pupils are clear that they know whom to go to if they have a problem. Child protection arrangements and those to guarantee pupils' health, safety and welfare meet current requirements. Good systems for checking pupils' attendance have led to improvements in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent. The school has good links with outside agencies to support pupils' needs, for example the school nurse and the attendance officer. There is good provision to support the needs of learners with difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable pupils through the 'nurture' classes. Academic guidance is beginning to help pupils improve their achievement. All pupils are set targets to help them progress and they have a clear understanding of these targets what they must do to achieve them. Older pupils know what they are aiming for in the National Curriculum levels.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Senior staff have worked hard with governors to establish a clear direction for the school through increased checking of provision and pupil performance. The improvements in the marking of pupils' work and the effective transition of pupils' learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1 are evidence of this and indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve its performance further. School self-evaluation is satisfactory and is beginning to involve middle and subject leaders. However, although their role is clear, they are not yet sufficiently analysing assessment information relating to pupils' achievement in order to identify specific actions that will raise standards. Governors know the school well and fulfil their duties satisfactorily, providing sufficient challenge to the school through the work of its committees. They are beginning to become more involved in checking the quality of provision themselves, for example through a recent analysis of teachers' marking. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. Leaders have analysed the community and there is a clear plan to promote community cohesion with communities beyond the local area, for example with communities where there are pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

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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?	2
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 <sup>1</sup> 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

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<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>	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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

8 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Littleton Green Community School, Cannock WS12 4PD

Thank you making us feel so welcome and for being so helpful when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and finding out the things you like doing. We think that Littleton Green is a satisfactory school with a number of strengths.

These are the main things we found out about your school

- You make satisfactory progress in your work, although the standards you reach in your reading, writing and mathematics are below average compared to those seen in some schools.
- You have a good understanding of how to live healthily and how to stay safe.
- Your behaviour is good and you show good attitudes to your learning.
- You really enjoy coming to school and like your lessons and your teachers, although we found that in some lessons, you are not sure how to do the activity you are set by the teacher.
- You like the activities that the school provides, especially the clubs.
- You make a good contribution to the life of the school through the school council and the different jobs you do, such as playground buddies.
- You understand your targets and marking helps you to improve your work.
- The adults in school look after you well and work hard to help you do your best.

In order to make the school better, we have asked the staff to do the following:

- improve your standards in reading, writing and mathematics so that more of you reach the levels expected by making sure that all of you have opportunities to use your reading, writing and mathematical skills in all your subjects
- improve your lessons so that all of them are good by building on what you already know and making clear what the teacher wants you to do
- make sure that those teachers who are in charge of subjects check carefully how well you are doing and take actions to help you improve your standards.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by behaving well.

Best wishes

Brian Holmes

Lead inspector