

# Ludgershall Castle Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126489
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328506
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Townsend HMI

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	239
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>	Martin Shakespeare
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andy Bridewell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 July 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>	Short Street Ludgershall Andover SP11 9RB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01264 790375
<b>Fax number</b>	01264 791329

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

## Description of the school

Ludgershall Castle is slightly larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including the number with a statement of special educational needs is average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception Year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement and standards reached in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate. Since the last inspection, standards in Key Stage 1 have slipped back to levels that are significantly below average. In Key Stage 2, although there is some improvement on the exceptionally low attainment seen in 2008, the unvalidated results for Year 6 in 2009 have not risen sharply enough and remain significantly below average in writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress between Key Stage 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory and their achievement is inadequate. Over the past year, the headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard in collaboration with the local authority to address this. They continue to track pupils' progress carefully and, recently, leaders have increased the consistency with which teachers set realistic and challenging targets. As a result, the decline in pupils' achievement and standards has been halted. It can clearly be seen in their work that pupils have recently been making better progress. However, the impact of these initiatives has been too recent to enable older pupils to make up the lost ground. Effective pastoral care and support ensure pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children's social and emotional development is promoted well, including for those pupils who find it more difficult to adjust to school life. Pupils grow in confidence as they get older, responding well to the encouragement they receive from the teachers and teaching assistants. They lead safe and healthy lives in school. Most pupils show good attitudes to learning and good behaviour towards others around school and in lessons.

Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Some good systems are in place to give pupils advice on how well they are learning and what they need to do next to improve but these are not yet fully embedded. Other features of some effective teaching seen, such as the close match between the work set and pupils' needs, the levels of challenge offered to the more able and the quality of dialogue in lessons, are not yet apparent in all classes.

The effective headteacher has worked closely with his new staff team to implement helpful action plans focused on raising achievement. He has ensured all staff play a full role in this work, including subject leaders who are adding to the school's accurate understanding of the pupils' learning needs. Governors discharge their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily. They are closely involved in setting the school's future direction and in its work to engage 'hard to reach' families more fully in their children's learning. However, governors and leaders are not yet linking evaluations of progress in implementing action plans closely enough to the targets set for pupils' achievement. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the work of staff to move it forward. The school has found a clear course towards raised achievement and demonstrates a sound capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start at the school because of the effective provision for the Reception Year. Their personal development and well-being are carefully nurtured and are good. They settle well into routines. This is a result of carefully planned arrangements for transfer from the pre-school settings they attend and because of the well organised classroom environment. Children play sensibly alongside each other and listen well to adults. The outdoor play area is full of attractive equipment and is in regular use. There is a good range of opportunities for structured play across the areas of learning and adults provide good individual support to children. Each child's progress is assessed carefully and they achieve well. This year, from below average starting points, the majority of children reach the levels expected for their age by the end of the year in writing, number calculations and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Daily sessions of linking sounds and letters are having a positive impact and some children are already gaining confidence as they develop their writing skills. Occasionally, whole-class discussions do not fully involve all children. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Improvements have been secured in the way staff track children's achievement and in the extent to which assessments are drawn from observations of child-led learning. The teaching team has worked hard to involve parents from the time their children start at school and participation, for example in family learning activities, is increasing. The school recognises there is more to do to engage all parents further on a regular basis.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that all pupils know what they need to do to improve further and are fully challenged to reach the targets set for them.
- Link evaluations of improvement planning more closely to the impact of measures taken to increase pupils' achievement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have been very low for a number of years and are not rising quickly enough. National assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 were significantly below average in 2007 and 2008. The school has not met its statutory targets in recent years, including 2009. Overall, the progress made by pupils across Key Stage 2 is very low and has been amongst the lowest nationally. Until recently, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have not made sufficient progress in relation to their starting points. While some pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made better progress recently because of improved teaching arrangements, their underachievement in earlier years means that, for Year 6 in particular, there has been insufficient time to catch up the lost ground. Early indications from this year's national tests show that the standards achieved in Year 6 are likely to be very low, especially in writing and mathematics. Too few pupils reach the higher levels and groups of pupils across the school do not achieve as well as they should. These vary from year to year and between girls and boys in different subjects. However, there are signs that the downturn in standards has been arrested and improvements are predicted for 2010. Some effective support is in place for less able pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whose progress in recalling number facts and carrying out calculations has

accelerated recently. Pupils in Year 5 are on course to reach their ambitious targets for English but have a long way to go to reach the expected levels in mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The good start made in the Reception Year is successfully built upon throughout the school and pupils' personal development is good. Pupils conform quickly to the school's expectations of good behaviour, and their attitudes towards learning, especially in mathematics, are improving. They work well together in groups and pairs, talking to each other with confidence and explaining their ideas well in some lessons. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They know right from wrong and are cooperative in work and play. They respond well to the increased opportunities the school provides to promote their understanding of Britain's cultural diversity. Pupils understand how to keep safe, fit and healthy and act on this awareness. Pupils say that should any bullying or other misbehaviour occur it will be dealt with promptly. Attendance is average and pupils like coming to school. They enjoy the good relationships they share with each other and with staff and their parents confirm this. The school council is an effective way for pupils' opinions to be heard and members welcome the support they receive from other pupils. Many are involved in community activities, such as environmental issues and fundraising for charitable causes. Pupils' underdeveloped skills in literacy and numeracy create weaknesses in their preparation for future education and the workplace, but other skills such as teamwork are developed well.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school has worked hard to put in place strategies for pupils to evaluate their own learning. These are having a positive impact, especially in the classes for older pupils. Teaching assistants give effective support to groups and individual pupils in lessons. Behaviour is managed well. Teachers have successfully helped pupils improve their attitudes to work over time but some of them, especially boys, continue to lack refined self-help strategies and are not yet able to work independently. There remains, too, some variability in the quality of teaching. The high quality dialogue that is evident in some lessons is absent from others. The same is true of the extent to which teachers use assessment information to fine-tune their lesson planning and to ensure that work is matched as precisely as possible to the needs of the pupils. Some teachers challenge those ready to move on in their learning more readily than others.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Basic skills form the basis of long-term planning, providing a secure foundation for linking subjects together in ways that pupils understand and enjoy. They respond well in all subjects to the 'thematic' approach. Teachers do not always plan lessons to account for the wide range of ages and abilities in their groups. Pupils enjoy enrichment opportunities such as their residential visits and the three modern foreign languages available. Extra-curricular sports contribute well to promoting pupils' fitness and they enjoy rehearsing and planning musical performances. The curriculum is successful in promoting good personal

development, but despite recent improvements it is not yet used effectively to raise standards and achievement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Parents rightly appreciate the way the school offers pupils a safe and caring environment in which to learn and develop as young people. Safeguarding procedures are effective. Visits beyond school are carefully assessed for risk. First aid, health and safety and child protection policies are clearly known and implemented fully.

Pupils have not always reached the moderately ambitious targets. Teachers now have a clearer picture of the progress pupils make towards their targets and those set are now more accurate and challenging. They are discussed with older pupils, who are now aware when targets have been met and what to do next to improve. Many enjoy the dialogue with their teacher that occurs through marking and guidance in their books. However, younger pupils are not as clear about their targets. Some parents are responding well to the school's efforts to guide them in providing support for pupils' learning at home, but not all do so.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. Leaders have worked hard this year to make sure the school remains on track after a number of recent staff changes and that standards and achievement improve. However, as the senior leaders acknowledge, these have not risen sufficiently. Senior and middle managers are fully involved in evaluating the school's performance and self-evaluation is generally accurate. The school uses partnerships effectively; for instance to ensure a smooth transition for children from pre-school settings into the Reception Year and when Year 6 pupils move into secondary schools. Outside agencies are involved well in setting up provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Although its strategy for the promotion of community cohesion is underdeveloped, the school engages satisfactorily with a number of groups within the locality and is reaching out to form links with other communities. Improvement plans are well constructed and have been a useful vehicle for improving the quality of provision. However, evaluations of progress with the plans are not linked sharply enough to outcomes in terms of raising achievement.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
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?	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?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<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	4

## 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?	3

## 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	4
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	4
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?	Yes

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

9 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ludgershall Castle Primary, Andover, SP11 9RB

Thank you for all your help during the inspection and for the welcome you gave both of us. We are especially grateful to the school council for telling us all about your school. It is a happy place in which to learn. In many areas of its work, the school is doing a satisfactory job, but it needs to improve standards in English and mathematics, which have been well below those found in most schools. Your headteacher and the adults in school are working very hard to improve the situation and things are moving forward, but everyone agrees that the school needs to do even better. Ludgershall Castle has been given a 'notice to improve'. This means an inspector will visit again in about six months' time to check that the school is on track. The school will be inspected again in about one year's time.

Here are some of the good things we found:

- The youngest children get off to a good start in Reception and settle into school well.
- Your behaviour is good, although a small number of you do misbehave upon occasions.
- You know how to stay safe and lead healthy lives.
- You have good attitudes to school and enjoy taking part in the wider activities on offer, including the chance to learn more than one modern foreign language.
- The school is moving forward and is making improvements happen.

These are the main improvements the school needs to make:

- Raise standards and achievement so that it does as well as most other schools nationally in writing and mathematics.
- Make sure all lessons challenge you all to achieve well. You all need to have and know your targets for improving your work.
- Ensure leaders check that the improvements they put in place have truly helped you all to progress well in your learning.

You can play your part by working hard and thinking about your targets.

Yours faithfully

David Townsend

Her Majesty's Inspector