

The Lantern Community Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134014
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	328799
Inspection date	25 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Julie Winyard 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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	270
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 Roderick Mair
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Cobley
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Nene Road Ely Cambridgeshire CB6 2WJ
Telephone number	01353 664174
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- whether the school is doing everything it can to raise standards and achievement and improve progress for boys in writing and girls in mathematics, middle and higher attaining pupils and lower attaining groups
- the quality of teaching, including marking and feedback and its impact on pupils' progress across the school and the quality
- the impact of leadership at all levels with particular focus on middle leaders and their impact on school improvement.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, discussions with staff, pupils and governors and a scrutiny of pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors 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

Lantern Community Primary is an average sized primary school with a well below average percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. It has a below average proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is slightly below average, with fewer pupils who speak English as an additional language than is found in similar schools nationally. The school has the Healthy Schools Award, and it is a partnership school with Homerton College. There is an onsite playgroup called Puffins that is not managed by the school. The school takes children from six other local playgroups as well. The school opened in 2004 with two classes and has been growing year on year since then. It now has nine classes and will continue to grow until 2012 when the total on roll will be around 420. This continuous change in staffing and pupil population, combined with an ongoing building programme, has provided considerable challenge to the governors and senior leadership team.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

In the words of one parent, 'I believe The Lantern School to be an excellent school'. This view was supported by the large number of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire, and the inspection team agree that this is an excellent school. A small minority of parents expressed concerns regarding bullying, however no evidence of this was found during the inspection. The pupils themselves were definite that they feel very safe at school and there is no bullying. Other parents said how pleased they are with the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures.

Another parent wrote, 'The atmosphere of the school is excellent and has been maintained despite the extensive disruption provided by the building work'. Inspection evidence found that this is due to the outstanding leadership of the headteacher who has worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils' learning and development are paramount. She has very successfully managed the considerable changes in pupil numbers and staff over the last five years, ably supported by the effective governing body who also provide appropriate challenge to senior leaders. The inspection team also agree with another parent who wrote, 'Mrs Cobley has built an excellent team of staff. They are truly dedicated and enthusiastic'. The senior leadership team is outstanding and has the range of skills necessary to develop the school further. Middle leaders are mainly new to their posts. However, most were experienced in leadership roles in schools prior to their recent arrival at the school and are making a good start. Self-evaluation is accurate because the school is exceptionally good at monitoring and evaluating its work. The current tracking and target setting systems are extremely rigorous, and appropriately challenging targets have been set for all pupils which they are on track to achieve. All these factors mean that the school has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

The standards reached by pupils are well above average. At the end of Year 2 they are above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Standards have steadily improved since the school opened. In 2010 the first group of pupils will be assessed at Year 6 and these pupils, currently Year 5, are well on track to attain standards that are well above average. Most pupils make outstanding progress through the school. There is no significant difference between the achievement of different groups and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because of the excellent tracking systems, accurate and carefully moderated teacher assessment and good and often outstanding teaching. The school is keen to ensure that all teaching is outstanding and has plans in place to try to bring this about. In the best teaching seen, teachers' very thorough planning meant that explanations were crystal clear and pupils of all abilities knew exactly what they were meant to learn and why. The use of carefully worded success criteria ensured that pupils knew how to achieve their best work in the lesson. For example, in a Year 3 lesson where pupils had to make up their own riddle about an object to make it hard for other pupils to guess what the object was. 'It took them 20 guesses to get mine!' one pupil said proudly. However, marking and written feedback in pupils' books does not always refer to these success criteria or explain exactly how pupils can further improve their work. Teaching assistants are used well in lessons to support learning and give good targeted support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because of the excellent care, support and guidance they receive. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are extremely robust and well managed. Pupils love learning and this is evident in

all lessons because they are absorbed in the work they are given and find it interesting and fun. This is due to the outstanding curriculum that the school provides. For example, pupils are given many opportunities for extended writing in other curriculum areas. They find this highly motivating and it results in outstanding work, for example the Second World War booklets written by Year 3. Pupils are excited by new challenges, for example in a Year 2 lesson where they were constructing the first page of a PowerPoint presentation and in a Year 5 lesson where they were delighted by the challenge of retelling the story of the Silver Arrow from the point of view of the Sherriff of Nottingham. As a result of their enjoyment of learning, behaviour in lessons is excellent and pupils collaborate extremely well. Behaviour is also exemplary around the school and on the playground. Pupils' very high level of skills in literacy and numeracy means they are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of their education. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. Cultural development is good. Despite the outstanding sense of community within the school and close links with the local community, the promotion of community cohesion is good. This is because the links that have been made with schools in Camden and Malawi are not yet fully developed. These links should support pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures within a different socio-economic context.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding broadly in line with what is expected at this age. The strong links forged with the pre-school settings and families ensure that children settle quickly, make outstanding progress and that parents are fully informed and involved in supporting their children's learning. Of note is the good practice for joint planning of play-based learning activities being developed with the Puffins playgroup that prepares children especially well for their entry into school.

Children like coming to school. They feel safe and make excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Children improvise and communicate well with others during role play; they understand daily rules and routines, and have an excellent understanding of how these are important for their safety. They make excellent progress in their social skills and in their self-confidence and are good communicators. They quickly become aware of themselves as individuals, learn to share and take turns and to respect and acknowledge each other's achievements.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Staff have high expectations and work very effectively as a team in organising an exciting range of activities, both inside and outdoors, that children thoroughly enjoy. Excellent use is made of ongoing assessment and review of children's progress to keep them engaged and challenged in their learning and development. The well-planned curriculum provides a well-balanced mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities that fully meet the children's learning needs. They learn in bright, stimulating classrooms and in a well-equipped outdoor space, both of which are used imaginatively to capture children's attention and make learning fun. Support for individual children who find learning difficult or are potentially vulnerable is particularly good, enabling them to enjoy success. As a result, all children make at least good progress with many achieving very well against their starting points and attaining standards above the national average by the time they enter Year 1.

There is outstanding provision for children's care and guidance. Their health and welfare are given a high priority and risk assessment is firmly embedded in day to day practice. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, with a very clear focus

on continuous improvement, based on accurate self-evaluation and knowledge of each child's individual learning and development needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure marking and written feedback is consistent across the school and pupils know exactly how well they have achieved and what they need to do to further improve their work.
- Implement existing plans to share best practice to increase the amount of teaching that is outstanding.

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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?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
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?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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**

26 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Lantern Community Primary School, Ely, CB6 2WJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You looked after us very well and we were impressed with your excellent behaviour in lessons, around the school, and with how well you work and play together. I would like to say a special thank you to the school council for giving up their dinner break to talk to us and to the groups of pupils who came to talk about their work. I was very pleased to hear that you enjoy word problems so much because they 'get you to use your brain in different ways'. It was also impressive that you know your learning targets so well and find them helpful.

We agree with you that Lantern Community Primary is an outstanding school. Mrs Cobley and the staff are doing an excellent job in making sure you all learn well even when there are so many changes going on all the time, especially the building work. There is some excellent teaching and because of this, you really love learning. I particularly enjoyed hearing you retell the story of the Silver Arrow in the voice of the Sherriff of Nottingham! It was also great fun trying to solve those very tricky riddles. You were much better than I was at this and I definitely would never have guessed the one about the onion!

There are two things that we thought the school could do even better.

- Ensure that marking and written feedback in your books is equally helpful in all classes so that you all know exactly what you have done well and what you need to do to improve your work even more.
- Continue to get the teachers to observe each other's teaching so that they all have really good ideas about how to make all your lessons excellent.

With very best wishes for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

Julie Winyard

Her Majesty's Inspector