

Lyneham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135177
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	329047
Inspection dates	31 March –1 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Chris Nye 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)	337
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	Malcolm Silcock
Headteacher	Julie Carr
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Preston Lane Lyneham Chippenham SN15 4QJ
Telephone number	01249 890413
Fax number	01249 890984

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Lyneham Primary School opened in September 2007, following the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. The new headteacher took up her post in September 2007 and the deputy headteacher was appointed from September 2008. The school, which is larger than average, serves the village of Lyneham and the surrounding area. Most pupils are of White British heritage, and the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly below average. Over 70% of the pupils come from families whose parents/carers work for the Royal Air Force (RAF), and as a result of service postings, the proportion of pupils who join or leave the school partway through each year or key stage is much higher than usual. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in two reception classes. The school has gained the Active Sports Award and the International Award (foundation level).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Lyneham Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for pupils. It has many strengths and, under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, a considerable amount has been successfully achieved in the short time since the school opened. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the new school and many commented on how rapidly it has established a positive and caring ethos where every pupil is valued. One parent's comment reflects the views of many: 'Care at the school is exceptionally good. It is sensitive and inclusive.' Staff have a very clear and realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and strategic plans to address the weaker areas are having a positive impact on improvement. The school has good capacity to improve further. Pupils enter the reception classes with knowledge and understanding slightly below the levels expected for their age, but make good progress and reach average standards by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. At the end of the school's first year (Summer 2008), standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were broadly average, although they were below average in Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics. The school's very detailed and accurate tracking data show that progress has improved throughout the school this year and is now satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. However, not enough of the more able pupils are reaching the higher National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but they are improving and an increasing number of lessons are good. However, the school recognises that lesson activities do not yet consistently challenge all groups of pupils to do their best, and this is particularly holding back progress for the more able pupils. The curriculum is a developing area and is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Most pupils behave well, act responsibly and show positive attitudes towards their school and each other. A small minority of parents expressed concern about behaviour, but inspection evidence shows that although a small number of pupils present challenging behaviour, the school deals with this very well. Pupils have an excellent awareness about how to keep themselves safe and, because of a well-planned approach towards encouraging healthy lifestyles, they have a good understanding about how to keep themselves fit and well. Pastoral care and support are very good. However, although high quality systems have recently been established to provide clear and robust guidance to pupils about how they can improve their work, they are not yet being consistently applied throughout the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for the youngest children is good, ensuring that they make good progress during their time in the reception classes. As a result of a focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, using numbers as labels and linking sounds and letters are developing areas of strength. Children are encouraged to take an active part in their learning, for example by choosing their activities, and a rich and varied curriculum helps to ensure that they are developing an enthusiasm for learning. Reception classes are well resourced and good use is made of the available space, both inside and outside the building, to support learning.

Well-qualified staff provide a good level of care and support, and this leads to the children's good personal development and well-being. Children behave well and are developing good

learning habits, for example both in working independently and with others. Good links exist between home and school, as well as with pre-school providers. Teaching is good because teachers have a good understanding of children's learning and developmental needs, and use ongoing assessment well to plan activities. Good opportunities for independent learning are provided and well-planned teaching ensures an appropriate balance between child-chosen and adult-led activities. The reception provision is led well, and effective monitoring and good team working by all staff ensure that it is well placed to develop further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Ensure that teaching consistently challenges all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- Ensure that the school's best practice regarding the guidance given to pupils about how to improve their work is consistently applied.

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

The school recognises that standards in the past have been too low. Following a strong focus on improving reading and writing, particularly for boys, and in using and applying mathematics, standards are now starting to rise. The school's rigorous individual tracking records, verified by inspection evidence, show that in Key Stage 1 they are on track to meet their own challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics. However, more able pupils are achieving less well, and the school recognises that such pupils are not being consistently challenged in lessons.

In Key Stage 2, pupils are making satisfactory progress and the school is successfully tackling recent underachievement in English, mathematics and science. As a result most pupils are on track to achieve their targets. The school is aware that it is not yet making enough use of assessment data to inform teaching and ensure that its higher expectations can be fully realised, but is working hard to achieve this. For example, strategies such as pupil progress meetings which lead to focused individual or small group teaching are beginning to have a very positive impact on standards and progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and the recent provision of intervention strategies such as 'Reading Recovery' is starting to help them make better progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

As one parent commented, the school's value system 'gives children a sense of responsibility'. Pupils' social skills are well developed and they demonstrate a good commitment to the school and local community, for example through support for charities such as World Vision, acting as playground helpers and serving on the school council. The excellent assemblies, developing links with other cultures and good social and emotional training help to ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness of safety and are encouraged to contribute to risk assessments, for example by their use of the 'near miss' book to report any concerns. Behaviour in class and around school is good, although sometimes noise levels are too loud in class and this can slow the pace of

learning. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and the few incidents of challenging behaviour are dealt with extremely well, for example by use of the 'Chill Room' which helps pupils understand how to manage their anger when they are upset. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves fit and healthy because the school offers a wide range of regular opportunities to keep fit, including sport, dance and physical education. There are high levels of participation in these activities. Pupils say that they enjoy school and this is reflected in parental comments. For example, one said that 'Children are flourishing and thoroughly enjoy their learning.' Attendance is satisfactory, and the school is doing all that it reasonably can to improve on this. Pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are satisfactory, and a good focus on team working and the use of information and communication technology is helping pupils to develop other skills to support their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Throughout the school, relationships are good and classrooms are bright and stimulating. At its best, teaching is well planned to meet pupils' needs and the tasks and activities challenge pupils to do their best. In such lessons, teachers' explanations are clear and, because expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high, the pace of learning is brisk and pupils make good progress. An example of this was seen in a literacy lesson, where pupils responded well to the challenge to make their sentences longer, more interesting and more detailed. However, such good teaching is not consistently seen throughout the school and in some lessons expectations of work and behaviour are too low, so the pace of lessons slows. In particular, the higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently stretched in such lessons. The excellent assessment and tracking systems are beginning to effectively inform teaching and support learning, but this, too, is not yet fully embedded. Teaching assistants are very well trained and are making a very positive contribution to learning, particularly for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school is at an early stage of adopting a curricular plan which has coherence and the progressive acquisition of a wide range of skills at its heart. This is a promising development, but it is too soon to judge its impact on teaching and pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the greater emphasis on skills for learning, for example in reading and mental mathematics, is starting to bear fruit and pupils' progress in these areas is improving as a result. The school offers a wide range of curricular enrichment activities. Residential visits and dance lessons are having a very beneficial impact on the way pupils learn and work together. Music and art are strong features of the curriculum. Close links to the village and the local RAF base help to ensure that curricular planning is suitably linked to the specific needs of the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The pastoral care and support of pupils are excellent, especially for those who are vulnerable. Links with outside agencies to support pupils are strong and the inclusion consultant works closely with the school and families to help ensure that pupils' individual needs are met. All

safeguarding requirements are in place and rigorously applied. Bullying and racism are very rare because the school is proactive in tackling such issues when they arise.

Academic guidance is a weaker area. Effective systems to ensure that pupils receive helpful guidance about how to improve their work have been put in place, although these are not yet being applied consistently throughout the school. At its best, marking provides clear 'next steps' advice to pupils and encourages them to be involved in assessing their own learning. However, although marking is always encouraging, it is sometimes not informative enough; weaknesses are not always highlighted and guidance about how to improve is not always made sufficiently clear, so some pupils are unsure about their individual targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The senior leadership of the school is outstanding. Under the very clear and inspirational direction of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior leadership team, the school has made impressive progress since it opened. Senior leaders have a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school because they monitor and evaluate developments rigorously and put in place effective strategic plans to address weaknesses. The school recognises that whilst subject leaders also have a very clear understanding of the school's direction, they are at an early stage of developing other aspects of their roles such as responsibility for raising standards in their specific subject areas. Governors provide good support and had a positive impact on the setting up of the new school. However, owing to a high turnover of governors, systems to monitor the performance of the school are not yet fully embedded. A good contribution to community cohesion is made within the school and at a local level, but recent plans to develop pupils' understanding of diverse communities within Britain are at an early stage and have not yet had a marked impact.

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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	NA
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

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?	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	1
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

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?	3

Leadership and management

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	1
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	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**

2 April 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Lyneham Primary School, Lyneham SN15 4QJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to your school this week. We really enjoyed chatting to you and the grown-ups, looking at your work and sharing your lessons. We thought that you were very polite and well behaved. Well done!

I am sure that you will be keen to hear what we thought of your school. We think that, under the brilliant leadership of the headteacher, everyone who works at the school has done a really good job in uniting the two schools into one. You now go to a school where everyone feels valued and well cared for. We were especially impressed with how the school keeps you safe, and with how well the school knows its strengths and weaknesses. We think that at the moment the school is satisfactory because although there are good things in some parts of the school, they are not yet fully in place in other parts. However, we think that the school is well placed to become really good in the future, so even though it is early days, everyone has made a really good start. You can help the school improve by making sure that you attend school regularly, work your hardest in class, and are not content with work that you know you can do better.

To help your school improve, we have asked its leaders to focus on three things:

- Improve standards in English and mathematics, especially for those who find learning easier.
- Make sure that teachers always challenge you to do your best work and behave really well, so that everyone makes good progress in all lessons.
- Make sure that the really good advice that some of you are already given about how to improve your work is given to everyone.

Thank you again for your help with the inspection. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Chris Nye

Her Majesty's Inspector