

Loxley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107049
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	336793
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Careless
Headteacher	Mr Peter Heaton
Date of previous school inspection	0 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Forty-five per cent of the inspection was spent on looking at learning. The inspectors visited 16 lessons or parts of lessons and observed eight teachers during the inspection. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation and plans, assessment and tracking systems, policies, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Questionnaires from 101 parents, 100 pupils and 16 staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well the school promotes improved attainment in writing
- how well current teaching and provision addresses fluctuating standards in Key Stage 1 and sustains high attainment in Key Stage 2
- how effectively the school raises pupils' awareness of diversity in Great Britain
- key strengths in leadership and in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is lower than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few speak English as an additional language. A larger than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The current headteacher took up his post in January 2009. The school has achieved several external awards including Healthy Schools, Activemark, Artsmark, Basic Skills, National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) Challenge Award for Gifted and Talented provision, Investor in People status and Financial Management in Schools. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Reception class. The school runs its own breakfast club daily from 8.15am.

Loxley Nursery school shares the school site. It is run by an outside provider. Loxley after-school club is also situated on the school site. Neither setting was part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Loxley primary school is an outstanding school. This thriving learning community has many strengths. It provides outstanding value for money as pupils achieve exceptionally well and reach high standards. It fully meets its remit of 'Aiming High Together'. Parents typically describe Loxley as 'a fabulous school'.

Much has improved since the last inspection. For instance, standards have risen significantly, the curriculum leadership team has developed well, and there is more effective provision for learning outdoors for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The current leadership has built successfully on previous strengths. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work effectively together and are moving the school forward at a rapid pace. Morale among the staff team is high. The school's excellent capacity for sustained improvement is reflected in how well it has tackled issues raised at the last inspection, as well as the leadership's accurate view of key strengths and priorities for development. Governors are closely involved in the daily life of the school and help to draw up priorities. Nonetheless, they do not actively monitor or promote community cohesion.

First-class partnerships with parents, carers and other organisations deliver a wealth of external support and expertise to the school. It puts this to very good use. For example, it is a long-standing member of the 'Yorkshire Triangle' network of schools from four neighbouring local authorities. This network works with the National College for School Leaders to develop strong working relationships between learning communities. These links help the school to promote staff knowledge and expertise and so raise the quality of provision for pupils. Consistently, very high quality teaching, coupled with an extremely rich curriculum and first-class pastoral care, guidance and support are all key characteristics that reinforce the school's outstanding provision. Excellent use of assessment information to support learning results in a rigorous analysis of pupils' achievements and what they need to do next to improve. Pupils develop in maturity and become highly effective members of the school community. Their excellent basic skills, coupled with strong personal and social characteristics ensure that pupils develop first-class skills to support their future economic well-being. Even so, they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to take on responsibilities to strengthen these outcomes still further. Pupils comment, Loxley is a great school and encourages you to work hard and always do your best'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more opportunities for pupils and children in Reception, to develop further

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their independence and social skills by:

- offering them more responsibility in all aspects of school life
 - increasing further the knowledge they have of their own learning
 - developing their awareness of diversity in British society.
- Ensuring governors shoulder more specific responsibility for the promotion of community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils enjoy and show great pride in their school and delight in pointing out its strengths to visitors. They are diligent in lessons and settle quickly to the tasks set. Pupils are quick to volunteer replies to teachers' questions in lessons. They are confident learners and do not hesitate to ask for help, either from learning partners or adults. However, at times they do not have enough information about the levels at which they are working. Pupils carry out responsibilities conscientiously, although they are capable of more. For example, they provide lunchtime office cover for the administrative staff but do not yet take charge of their own school council meetings. Pupils behave very well and keenly follow the Loxley code'. They value those who tell the truth, speak politely, show consideration to each other, achieve their best and help others understand the consequences of what they do.

Pupils achieve outstanding well and consistently attain high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, from historically average starting points in Year 1. There have been recent improvements in pupils' skills, as they move into Year 1 from Reception, particularly in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with particular gifts or talents do equally as well as their peers because of the very successful support from skilful staff that they receive. The school's data and pupils' work shows that nearly double the national average of pupils are reaching the higher levels in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, although this varies between cohorts. For example, pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 have always had lower predicted outcomes as year groups than those currently in Year 5. Previous fluctuations in pupils' skills at Key Stage 1 are far less evident now as teachers' assessments are more accurate. Pupils maintain a clear focus on improving their writing skills throughout their time in school.

Pupils agree that Loxley Primary is a very kind and friendly place where everyone usually behaves well and makes the most of their time here. They typically comment, 'I can't wait to see the teachers in the morning'.

Pupils learn a lot about how to live healthily and to keep safe. For instance, they can talk about how to be cautious when using the internet. Pupils develop strong spiritual, moral and social awareness as they learn and play together. They have a limited awareness of cultural diversity in British society, although their knowledge of global similarities and differences is more strongly developed. Parents ensure that their children attend regularly and on time so that their attendance is above average.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Well planned lessons take account of the differing needs of pupils. As a result, there is equally strong provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as for the more-able. Very strong relationships between adults and pupils ensure that a positive atmosphere permeates lessons. Key strengths include the pace and challenge within lessons. Coupled with excellent assessment and tracking of pupils' work and progress, these result in consistently outstanding outcomes during the course of the year. Even so, some inconsistencies remain in how frequently staff update the target and working-level information at the front of pupils' books. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils in lessons and work very well alongside class teachers. The school is quick to search for unusual and sometimes 'homegrown' solutions in order to support pupils better. For instance, a group of pupils was identified with reading difficulties that were not responding well enough to interventions. Twelve staff members, from ancillary staff to the headteacher took on the daily responsibility to 'sponsor a child to read'. This involved sitting and listening to them read every day. The benefits to the confidence and skills of this group of erstwhile reluctant readers are clear

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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for all to see.

The rich curriculum is a strong driver in raising pupils' attainment. It establishes strong links between subjects. For example, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology offer support in other subjects and ensure that pupils' basic skills are very secure. An electronic voting system engages pupils totally in their numeracy work as, for example, they decide on the ascending numerical order for a random list of numbers and then electronically vote for the correct multiple choice answer. Pupils and their families particularly appreciate the various themed days and weeks throughout the year, including French days and enterprise weeks. These draw on the expertise of colleagues from a local secondary school and from the world of work to develop pupils' skills. Developing links with the Gambia increasingly help pupils to celebrate global similarities and differences. Enrichment opportunities are excellent.

Strong pastoral care and support maintains a nurturing environment in which all pupils, including the most vulnerable, do exceptionally well. Pupils know that staff care about them and this promotes their self-confidence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Driven leadership by the headteacher sets a clear tone for focused improvement in all areas of school life. The curriculum leadership team meets weekly and inexorably advances the school improvement priorities. There is no complacency here. Staff are highly motivated to improve their practice and are actively supported in their ongoing professional development by ambitious leaders. Close evaluation of outcomes ensures that senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths. They set clear priorities for areas that require further development. Meticulous tracking of pupils' progress provides accurate data from which the school plans pupils' next learning steps. The school establishes a very strong working partnership with parents and carers who value this approach and comment, 'The leadership is really passionate about making the school better in lots of ways'. First-class working relationships exist with a range of organisations. Staff work effectively with colleagues from neighbouring local authorities on many initiatives such as paired reading, community cohesion and leadership development. In addition, well-established links with outside agencies support particularly well the needs of pupils with individual gifts and talents or with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They receive regular opportunities to participate in

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programmes tailored to their own specific requirements.

The school meets the current statutory requirements for safeguarding. Parents and carers report that the school takes very good care of their children and inspection findings confirm this. Adults promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination well so that pupils, irrespective of background, gender or individual need, reach their potential. Governors serve the school well and offer effective challenge and support to the headteacher and staff. Even so, they do not yet take sufficient independent responsibility for promoting community cohesion. Conscientious and effective administrators and ancillary staff ensure the smooth running of the school day-to-day. They are strong ambassadors for the school's caring ethos.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

A cheerful and welcoming learning environment greets children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children arrive from up to 15 different pre-school settings and benefit from a well-planned induction programme. They settle quickly and enjoy school. All adults take very good care of the children and identify their individual needs very well. Children make good progress from their typically/ as expected starting points, although their communication and mathematical skills are below expectations when they join the school. A higher than average proportion of children reach average standards by the time they move into Year 1. The leader and staff are knowledgeable practitioners. They build well on children's prior learning and plan and evaluate effectively. This ensures that children get off to a strong start through:

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- a clear focus on developing speaking and listening skills
- sensitive pastoral care
- effective Early Years Foundation Stage leadership that helps to extend effective early years' practice throughout the school.

Children flourish in this busy setting which provides the key building blocks for their future learning and well-being. In particular, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader is influential in establishing very good phonics practice in Reception and then ensuring this continues through Years 1 to 3. Improvements to the outdoor learning environment allow children to choose freely whether to play and learn inside or outdoors. More work is planned to develop further the use of this area by children, particularly in support of their social, emotional and language development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Approximately half of all parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. They are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Parents typically praise, 'the great atmosphere in school', 'the friendly community ethos' and 'the highly visible, strong leader'. The school's own surveys of parents, carers and pupils reinforce these views. A few parents raised a variety of other individual concerns but there was no underlying pattern to these. Inspectors did not find evidence to support these opinions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Loxley Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	67	31	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	62	38	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	38	55	56	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	47	50	51	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	61	37	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	49	47	47	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	45	52	53	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	44	47	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	44	51	52	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	44	47	47	6	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	39	53	54	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	68	69	30	30	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	69	30	30	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Loxley Primary School, Sheffield, S6 6SG

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I inspected your school with my colleagues. In particular, thanks to the prefects who gave me such an enthusiastic tour of Loxley. I am writing to let you know what we found.

We judge Loxley to be an outstanding school. We saw how hard you work and how well you all do, whatever your individual needs. You are all very kind to each other and you work happily together. You have a good knowledge of how to live safe and healthy lives and you behave well. There are many exciting trips for you to enjoy and the curriculum is full of interest which is one important reason why you are all so happy here. Everyone has good things to say about your school!

One of the reasons for our visit was to see what your school could do even better. We have asked your headteacher to give all of you more opportunities to develop still stronger personal skills. For example, you are more than ready to run your school council without relying on adults to help you. You could, for example, think of more projects or alternative ways of working to improve your school for everyone who learns or works there. Also, the governors are going to make sure that you become more aware of the cultures of the many different groups of people who live in Great Britain today.

Carry on working hard and enjoying every moment in school!

With very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Hughes

Lead Inspector

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