

Latchingdon CE Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 115121 |
| Local Authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 338515 |
| Inspection dates | 9–10 December 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Geof Timms |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 126 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Anne-Marie Garrigan |
| Headteacher | Margaret Amery |
| Date of previous school inspection | 6 April 2007 |
| School address | The Street Latchingdon Chelmsford |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding and child protection policies and systems, samples of pupils' work, parents' comments on their children's progress and 50 parental questionnaires.

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

- the school's efforts to raise attainment, especially for boys and the most able, and particularly in writing and science
- how the school is trying to improve attendance
- the impact of recent improvements to assessment strategies
- improvements since the last inspection, including the impact of external support.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than many other primary schools. The vast majority of the pupils are from White British families. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and very high in some year groups. An above average proportion of the pupils have a statement of special educational need. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than normal is above average.

The school has the Sport England ActiveMark and a Healthy School award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school has improved since the last inspection and is now providing pupils with a good education. This is due to the hard work of the staff and their success in bringing about improvement. The school has an accurate picture of its progress, strengths and weaknesses through honest self evaluation, and has good plans in place to raise standards further. Together with the improvements made, recent rises in standards, and improvements to the quality of teaching and learning, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Standards are broadly average when pupils leave the school. This represents good progress given the low starting points of many children when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in their language and communication skills. Children get a good start to their schooling in the Reception year, and the good progress continues throughout the school. Standards are strongest in reading and mathematics. They are relatively weaker in writing and science because the school does not help enough pupils reach the higher levels in these subjects. Nevertheless, this issue has been recognised and a number of initiatives put in place to raise standards, although it is too soon to see the full impact of this work. For example, pupils' writing lacks care and precision, especially with regard to spelling, punctuation and handwriting. These shortcomings also affect the recording of scientific work, but pupils also have a limited grasp of scientific vocabulary. The school plans carefully to ensure activities and resources are appropriate for boys' styles of learning. Although boys do not reach standards that are as high as the girls, they do make good progress, as many of them start from much lower levels than the girls.

The good achievement is the result of good teaching and learning. Staff work hard to provide pupils with a sound curriculum, occasionally enriched with specific themed weeks, which pupils enjoy. The teaching has improved since the last inspection because assessment is more sharply focused and used more effectively in planning lessons. Because of these improvements, activities are often closely matched to the needs of pupils. Pupils say that the teachers' marking, and the good guidance they are given, help them understand what it is that they have to do to improve.

The school's leadership has willingly and successfully accepted outside expertise and guidance to help move it on to its current strong position. Good partnerships with a range of organisations and other schools have much impact on the provision. The governing body are effective in holding the school to account, and ensures pupils are safe and well looked after. The caring nature of the school is clearly shown in the pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, as well as their well-developed positive attitudes towards learning.

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Pupils say that they feel safe at school. Although the pupils' behaviour is good, and often outstanding, a minority of parents are not happy with the way occasional examples of poor behaviour or bullying are dealt with. The inspection found that although the school deals with these isolated incidents appropriately, it does not always make clear to parents and pupils what the outcomes have been. In addition, the school has not been successful in celebrating its many strengths more widely and openly within the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by increasing pupils' precision in handwriting, spelling and punctuation.
 - Ensure more pupils achieve higher levels in science by extending their scientific vocabulary and improving the way they record their work.
 - Improve the communication with parents and carers so that they are more aware of the school's strengths and the success of its day-to-day work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' good achievement is well supported by their readiness to work hard. They are developing some good learning habits, which will enable them to succeed at the next stage of their education, although some weaknesses remain in relation to writing and scientific skills. The quality of pupils' work in their books and in lessons shows broadly average attainment by Year 6, with particular strengths in reading and mathematics where the school is more successful at the higher Level 5. The school has been less effective at gaining these higher levels in writing and science. Although the content of much of the pupils' writing is good, it too often lacks care and precision in the way it is presented and in the use of punctuation and spelling. There is very good quality practical science work, which is much enjoyed by pupils. However, shortcomings in the recording of the outcomes of experiments and a narrow range of scientific vocabulary limit the quality of pupils' written work in this subject. The pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the well focused support they receive, while those with particular talents and gifts benefit from the good partnerships developed with other schools. The quality of the Christmas performances shows good standards are often reached in speaking, drama, dance and music.

The good learning in lessons is supported by pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes towards school. Pupils talk happily about their work and about the subjects they enjoy. They have satisfactory opportunities to take on responsibilities through the school council and play leader scheme. Pupils' attendance has been a strong focus for improvement since the last inspection. The school's efforts to promote good attendance have now lifted figures to their currently above average level.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |

How effective is the provision?

Pupils' interest and enthusiasm for their work is ignited by some creative and lively teaching that challenges and motivates pupils to do well. For example, in one lesson pupils designed and made high quality models of imaginative machines. They then wrote a storyboard script to promote their invention to others. This complex project involved design and technology, information and communication technology, art and design, communication and literacy skills. This is one example of how the school is developing links between several subjects and these enable pupils to use their skills in different ways, although this approach is still not a fully developed feature of the school's curriculum. The pupils clearly enjoy the special themed weeks, which also give them the chance to use their skills in a range of subjects. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Adults have good relationships with pupils and this encourages pupils' full participation in activities. It is rare to see a pupil who is not busily occupied in their work. The teaching assistants provide good, and often very effective, support for pupils. This is especially true for those who find learning more difficult or who do not settle quickly to tasks without support.

Teachers are developing their use of assessment to group pupils and to provide well-matched work. The marking and other guidance helps pupils improve and the recent introduction of target setting is ensuring that pupils understand what they need to do next. In most lessons expectations of the outcomes and the level of support for

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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pupils are adapted to need and ability, but this is not always the case. As a result, work is sometimes too easy, most especially for the more able.

This is a caring and friendly school where adults work hard to keep pupils safe and well. Its particular strength is illustrated in the provision for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is much improved since the last inspection. For example, very effective individual education plans are created that pupils can understand and use to help them learn. To further its effectiveness in this area, the school now plans to extend the nurturing side of its work for those pupils with social, emotional and physical needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| | 3 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The drive for improvement is strong and staff are all pulling together. Their success is already evident in improvements to provision and, particularly, in pupils' good achievement. Staff have made good use of an intensive programme of support from the local authority in their work. The headteacher and subject leaders have improved the effectiveness of their monitoring of the school's success. New tracking systems have been introduced, enabling senior staff to quickly identify any underachievement and work with class teachers to address this. This approach is aiding the good promotion of equal opportunities. Targets set are challenging and appropriately based on pupils' starting points. The development planning is detailed and focused on the correct priorities. This planning enables the vision for improvement to be effectively shared with staff, all of whom say that they are proud to work at the school. This shared ambition to do the best for the pupils is a strength of the school. This commitment is particularly well illustrated in the leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which has had a significant impact on provision since the last inspection.

The governing body hold the school to account effectively and have comprehensive systems for gathering information at first hand as well as receiving reports from the headteacher. These include regular visits to the school and links with subjects and subject leaders. Governors also ensure that on their visits they compare what they see of impact against the action plans for improvement. This helps them check that agreed actions are happening and effective. However, governors are not all well known to parents, and they have not done enough in the past to celebrate the successes and

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strengths of the school. Safeguarding requirements are met satisfactorily. The school has recently begun work to develop its current work on promoting community cohesion further so that pupils have a better understanding of others' lives. Community cohesion is already strong within the school and local area. The school has plans to develop links with a school in inner London, but this is yet to be fully up and running.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Reception class. They often work with pupils in Year 1, but also have dedicated time when they are taught separately. The planning is effective and ensures a good mix of activities children choose for themselves and those selected by the teacher. The outdoor area is used well, not only at playtime, but also for play-based activities that are part of the curriculum. During the inspection, for example, some children used chalks outside to develop their early writing skills. Pastoral care is strong. Staff ensure expectations are high and routines learned swiftly. As a result, children quickly get on very well together and are confident and happy. Provision for these children is well led and managed. Continuous assessment enables staff to track carefully how well children learn and this information shows the good progress they make from their often low starting points, and especially in developing their speaking and early reading skills.

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

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

Most of the parents are very happy with the school and the experiences their children have there. However, a minority do not feel that the school deals well with bad behaviour and because of this they feel the leadership is not fully responsive to their pupils' needs. Inspection evidence showed that the behaviour in the school was good and that when incidents did occur they were well and appropriately dealt with. However, the school has not been sufficiently effective in communicating with parents regarding these issues or in sharing and celebrating its strengths.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Latchingdon CE 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 126 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|----|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 20 | 40 | 28 | 56 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 20 | 40 | 23 | 46 | 5 | 10 | 1 | 2 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 13 | 26 | 36 | 72 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 12 | 24 | 31 | 62 | 7 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 18 | 36 | 29 | 58 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 11 | 22 | 34 | 68 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 10 | 20 | 34 | 68 | 5 | 10 | 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) | 9 | 18 | 36 | 72 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 14 | 28 | 30 | 60 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 6 | 12 | 25 | 50 | 11 | 22 | 6 | 12 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 6 | 12 | 32 | 64 | 6 | 12 | 3 | 6 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 6 | 12 | 30 | 60 | 10 | 20 | 1 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 11 | 22 | 33 | 66 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 2 |

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.



11 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Latchingdon CE Primary School, Latchingdon, Essex CM3 6JS

I am writing to thank you for the help you gave us during our recent visit to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views about the school. We also enjoyed seeing some of your Christmas Carol performance.

We found that your school is a good one. The staff and governors have done a lot to improve it since the last inspection. You are getting better at learning, especially in reading and mathematics, and make good progress. You behave well and this helps your teachers to do their job better. We were impressed with how enthusiastic you are in lessons, especially when you are given some really interesting things to do. You also told us how much you enjoy sport and school trips.

All the staff work hard to help you learn. They have good systems now for tracking how well you are doing so they can quickly help you if you are slipping behind. The headteacher and senior teachers lead and manage the school well, so that it runs smoothly and they get the best value they can out of the available money. They are also happy to seek and accept outside help when needed, all for the benefit of your learning. To help make the school even better we have asked the staff and governors to do three things:

- help you write more neatly and to spell and punctuate your work more accurately
- teach you to use scientific words and to be more careful when recording the results of your experiments
- make sure your parents and others know more about the good things going on in school.

Thank you once again for your help. Enjoy your time at Latchingdon and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector

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