

# Littledean Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115631
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338626
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Driscoll

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neill Rickette
<b>Headteacher</b>	Valerie Huggett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Church Street Cinderford GL14 3NL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01594 822171
<b>Fax number</b>	01594 822171
<b>Email address</b>	admin@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons and 7 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, parents and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' progress and attendance, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, and the responses to 68 parental questionnaires and to the pupils' questionnaire.

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

- the effectiveness of actions to improve attendance
- how much progress is made by pupils in Years 1 and 2
- whether pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early enough
- the reasons for the apparently slower progress in mathematics than other subjects.

## Information about the school

This small school serves a village in the Forest of Dean. The number of pupils on roll has risen significantly since the school was last inspected. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The school shares its site with the Little Acorns pre-school. This is privately managed and is subject to a separate inspection. Since the school was last inspected, it has achieved Healthy Schools status.

**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

Littledean is a good school, full of happy children and adults. It is a much different place to when it was last inspected, and more parents are choosing to send their children to the school as its effectiveness improves. The quality of teaching is now good, so pupils are making better progress. Progress is now good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do well in all years once their specific needs are identified. However, the identification of pupils who may have special educational needs relies too heavily on the view of the teacher, rather than scrutiny of assessments to see who is making too little progress. This leads to some such pupils not being identified early enough, especially in Years 1 and 2. Progress in English in Years 3 to 6 is outstanding, and is satisfactory in mathematics. There are several reasons for the differences in rates of progress in subjects and year groups, but the most significant one is how well the work is matched to pupils' needs. In English lessons in Years 3 to 6, for example, pupils quickly get down to work on tasks that build on what they have already learnt and take account of how quickly they assimilate new knowledge. In mathematics and in Years 1 and 2, in contrast, pupils spend too long sitting as a whole class, all doing the same task.

Most aspects of pupils' personal development are good. Pupils rightly have great confidence in the ability all the adults in school to take care of them and provide them with the support they need, when they need it. They are polite, respectful and well behaved. Pupils play an outstanding role in the community. They are immensely proud of their school and the part they have played in helping it to provide a better education, such as by redesigning and choosing equipment for the extensive play areas. Their role in the wider community is highly valued, especially the long-term project involving the development of the Cinderford Trail. All groups, even the youngest children, enthusiastically accept the many opportunities offered for them to take responsibility. The one aspect where personal development falls below a good level is in attendance, which is below average. Most pupils attend well, but the proportion of pupils who are persistent absentees, that is who miss the equivalent of more than one day each week, is high.

' Good leadership and management lie at the heart of the school's improvement. The headteacher has forged the staff into a strong team, who all play a role in the accurate evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Where actions are taken, such as in improving English, the school is invariably very successful. Nevertheless, this is a school with strong support from parents and one where achievement is determinedly being driven upwards, reflecting its accurate self-evaluation and, consequently, good capacity

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for sustained improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent to a level below the national average by May 2011 by:
  - taking firmer actions with parents who keep their children away from school without good reason
  - involving the Education Welfare Officer at an earlier stage
  - making attendance a key priority in the school development plan
- Improve progress in Years 1 and 2 from satisfactory to good by:
  - using data on pupils' progress to identify those with special educational needs as early as possible
  - ensuring pupils spend more time on tasks that are matched to the pupils' sometimes very different abilities.
- Improve progress in mathematics by:
  - providing more activities that promote mathematical development in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - ensuring pupils spend less time on whole-class activities and more on tasks that are matched to their ability
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

The work seen in lessons confirmed that attainment in Year 6 is above average in English and average in mathematics. This represents good achievement overall, both for boys and girls, with outstanding progress in English, given that these pupils started Year 3 with attainment that was below average. Their attainment in mathematics was average on starting Year 3, so their progress in mathematics is satisfactory. The differences in rates of learning were apparent in lessons observed by inspectors, and matched with the differences in pupils' enjoyment of the tasks. In lessons where each pupil finds the work a challenge, but still achievable, their concentration is often total. They work exceptionally hard in these circumstances, and sometimes the teacher has to encourage them to stop working at the end of the lesson because they are so engrossed. In these lessons, most often in English, behaviour is exemplary. In other lessons, more commonly in mathematics and in Years 1 and 2, behaviour is only satisfactory because pupils are not as well engaged with the work. They soon lose interest when they have to listen too long or when the work is too easy for them, and learning slows for middle and higher ability children in particular. As soon as they are placed into their groups, and given work that matches their ability, they are back to working hard again. This was particularly noticeable when Year 2 worked as a separate

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group and they made good progress as a result. Pupils work well in groups, often showing a degree of maturity in discussion, and persevere very well when working independently. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress because they receive support even when working on whole-class activities.

' Pupils feel particularly safe in school and both they and their parents report that there is no bullying at all. This is because of their well-developed moral code and respect for others' feelings and wellbeing. They are very appreciative of the school's efforts to help them live a healthy lifestyle, which most of them adopt well. The improvement in this aspect of the school's work has been rewarded through its status as a 'Healthy School'.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

here are many extra adults, including parents and governors, in lessons that significantly enhance the quality of provision. This allows the pupils to work in very small groups, or even individually, with adult supervision and support, on work that is closely matched to their needs. Assessments are accurate and used well in planning, so when pupils move

<sup>1</sup> 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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to their small groups, the tasks are invariably well matched to their ability. Lessons are also well planned to make the best use of adults and all are clear about their role and have a good understanding of their charges' needs. Pupils' good enjoyment of lessons is a result of the highly enjoyable contexts that are used to present work. For example, a combined Year 1 and 2 class loved solving problems about how to deal with dragons and sea monsters, and were inspired to write more as a result. Pupils have many opportunities to use computers and write at length in subjects across the curriculum, although there are too few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills. Pupils also enjoy the wide range of extra activities that are available, with some unusual ones such as 'boxercise'. However, the real jewel in the curriculum is the 'Forest Schools' work, which is so effective in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good efforts are made to broaden pupils' horizons, particularly trips to learn about life in other parts of the country, although these rarely focus on different faiths. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about money, both in mathematics lessons and also through their work in the community. These help to equip pupils with the skills they will need in later life.

Staff have a very deep knowledge of the children and their backgrounds, and no one more so than the Family Worker who has praise heaped upon her by families that she has supported. Most particularly, she has worked extremely effectively with pupils who have difficulty in controlling their emotions. One area where impact has been limited is in reducing persistent absenteeism. The school is sometimes a little too quick to accept the reasons given for some absences without advising parents of their responsibilities and does not involve the Education Welfare Officer soon enough. Pupils receive good support at times of change in their school lives. They are well prepared to join the Reception class, for changing classes and for moving to secondary education. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is based around individual education plans that provide targets that are highly specific to the individual pupil. These are used and monitored very well by the teaching assistants.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The first thing a visitor notices when entering the school is often the sound of laughter, and it is usually coming from the adults. The staff are not only very proud of their achievements, but also love coming to work. This is because the headteacher has

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promoted an ethos where everyone is valued and supported in their role. Staff know that they can try something new, without fear of being criticised if it doesn't quite work. All have pulled together to improve English, and the results have been remarkable. Some weaknesses, notably attendance, do not find their way onto the school's list of priorities so the same rate of improvement is not observed. Checks on lessons, carried out by all managers, including governors, clearly identify what works well. In the case of satisfactory lessons, clear areas for improvement are identified. However, this is not the case in good lessons, so teachers are not sure how their lessons can be consistently outstanding. Governors play a good role in monitoring the school's work, but do not meet the statutory requirement to publish a school profile. The school works hard to promote equality, with few differences in the progress of different groups. Racist incidents are almost non-existent, and pupils are successfully taught to respect others' cultures and backgrounds. This is helped by the school's good work on community cohesion. Staff have used their good knowledge of pupils to identify where they need to learn more about being part of a community. Visits to inner city schools show them what life is like in a city and what it means to come from a background different from White British. Work in the local and European community is very effective, but is more limited in areas outside of Europe. Staff take their responsibilities for care very seriously and the school adopts good practice across all areas of safeguarding.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make good progress in almost all areas of learning. Progress in creative,



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physical and social development is outstanding. The 'Forest Schools' initiative has had real impact on the children, especially their creative and physical development. On average, they spend half a day each week in the woods. They quickly learn the importance of following rules. In one lesson seen, their imagination ran wild as the den they built became the lookout on a pirate ship, a climbing frame or a castle. Most of all, however, they learn to take sensible risks, confident in the knowledge that one of the many adults is always keeping an eye on them. If they climb a tree, there is someone underneath. When they cook bread over the campfire, there is someone there to make sure they understand the danger of fire and that they do not get too close. When they return to the classroom, they take with them the lessons learnt about helping one another, taking turns and being patient. As a result, behaviour is outstanding, both in and out of the classroom. There is always a good range of different activities provided for children, but fewer that promote their mathematical development than other areas. This, together with limited displays related to mathematics, is why progress in the use of numbers is only satisfactory. Progress in literacy is good because adults are skilled at questioning pupils and getting them to speak, read and write at every opportunity. Activities are well planned to build on what children can already do, and provide a good balance between those led by the teacher and those chosen by the children themselves, although this is sometimes restricted by the lack of free access to the outdoor area. Good leadership and management are ensuring that provision is improving equally as well as the rest of the school. The manager has a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and where aspects can be improved further, although these do not always form part of a formalised plan. Parents are well supported to help their children to learn more quickly at home and are very appreciative of the provision made for their children in school.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

Parents are very happy with almost all that the school provides and particularly praise the quality of pastoral care and teaching. Some parents felt that their children, of middle or higher ability were not making enough progress in Years 1 and 2 because their needs were not consistently met. The inspectors fully agree with parents' views.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 98 pupils registered at the school.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Littledean Church of England 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	65	21	31	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	76	15	22	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	57	26	38	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	63	18	26	5	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	69	20	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	63	23	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	60	27	40	0	0	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)	47	69	19	28	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	63	20	29	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	56	26	38	2	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	53	30	44	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	52	25	37	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	74	16	24	1	1	1	1

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



13 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Littledean Church of England Primary School, Littledean, GL14 3NL

Many thanks for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be polite, well behaved and a joy to talk to. You are clearly very proud of your school and were keen to tell us how good it is. We agree. You get a good education and learn more quickly than we often see. You make brilliant progress in English and steady progress in mathematics. Progress is good for the youngest children in the school and for those of you in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory for others. You work very hard when you are given a task that you find difficult, but you can succeed if you really think about it. Sometimes you get a bit bored when you have to sit on the carpet for too long. So we have asked your teachers to make sure that you always make good progress by making sure you spend less time just listening and more time doing work that is given to you as an individual.

You get lots of opportunities to practise your writing and use computers in other subjects, and we have asked your teachers to give you more chances to apply your mathematical knowledge. You play an outstanding role in your school and local community. You are involved with so many things, and the way that you have changed the school grounds has made life better for everybody. However, some of you do not come to school often enough and miss out on some of the fun activities that you told us about, like going off to the forest. We have asked your headteacher to give your parents extra help in ensuring you come to school. You can help too, by telling your parents that you don't want to miss school unless you are really ill.

Yours is a very happy school. You feel safe because you are so well looked after, and all the adults enjoy coming to work. The headteacher has made the school a nice place to be, and this has made everyone feel good. The result is that your school is getting better and better every year.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll Lead inspector

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