

Longshaw Infant School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 119125 |
| Local Authority | Blackburn with Darwen |
| Inspection number | 339357 |
| Inspection dates | 21–22 September 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | John Dunne |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 222 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Florence Oldfield |
| Headteacher | Mrs Ann Brants |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 February 2007 |
| School address | Crosby Road Blackburn Lancashire BB2 3NF |
| Telephone number | 01254 260534 |
| Fax number | 01254 678351 |
| Email address | ann.brants@blackburn.gov.uk |

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at assessment data, individual education plans, case studies and monitoring and evaluation documents. Twenty-five parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

the effectiveness of measures to improve the attainment and other outcomes, particularly of boys

the effectiveness of measures in improving the quality of teaching and learning pupils' understanding of diversity and how well the school is promoting understanding of community groups beyond the school and the immediate locality

the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and how effectively the provision for them is led and managed.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average and the roll continues to rise. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is approximately three times the national average and is rising. Most pupils are of White British heritage; a small proportion are from minority ethnic groups and a very small number of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average and is rising. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises three Reception classes with an interlinked communal area and continuous access to an open play area.

The school has gained a number of awards including the School Achievement Award, Activemark, Eco Schools Bronze Award, Quality in Study Support Award and Financial Management in Schools 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

Longshaw is a good school. It has significant strengths in a number of areas: outstanding care, guidance and support; and outstanding partnerships with parents and carers, and other outside agencies.

Very strong collaboration with the nearby Nursery ensures that children settle happily in Reception. They adapt well to routines and quickly gain confidence and independence. Children in Reception make good progress. All the adults form a closely knit team who accurately record their observations of children's progress and plan effectively for the next stages of learning. The quality of teaching is good and activities are interesting and often exciting because many are suggested by the children themselves and this ensures that all are motivated to learn. Pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to build upon this good start. They reach broadly average levels of attainment by the end of Year 2, which represents good progress given their starting points. This is because teaching, overall, in Years 1 and 2 is good and some is outstanding. However, it is not consistently good throughout in all aspects. In some lessons there is too much teacher direction and not enough opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, work collaboratively or assess their own work or the work of others. This limits pupils' levels of independence and their acquisition of skills that will contribute to their future well-being as they move into the junior school. In addition, in a minority of lessons, all pupils do the same activities and so not all are sufficiently challenged.

Pupils' behaviour and relationships with each other and adults are good both in class and around school and this makes a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and personal development.

The headteacher's vision in striving for excellence is unanimously shared and backed up by rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work. The impact of this is evident from: improvements in attendance; elimination of weak teaching; significant reductions in persistent absences; strong recovery from a dip in standards in 2008; and the improvements in care, guidance and support. In addition, the school recognised that boys were beginning to achieve less well than girls. All staff collaborated effectively to reshape the curriculum to engage boys more and improve their attainment. Lessons seen during the inspection clearly indicate that this is working. Continued good outcomes and this positive and improving picture shows the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils become more independent in their learning and improve the

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skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being by:

- - enabling pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning
- - providing more opportunities for pupils to work both independently and collaboratively
- - allowing pupils to assess their own work and the work of others.
- Improve the attainment and progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 by:
- - ensuring that all teachers vary the work set for different pupils, taking into account what they can already do and what will extend them further.

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

Children's skills, knowledge and understanding when they join school are well below those expected for their age. When they enter Year 1 they have made significant gains, particularly in their personal development, but still lag behind in speaking for boys and reading and writing for all. In contrast, pupils' attainment, as seen in lessons and test results in Years 1 and 2, is broadly average in all areas, including reading and writing. This is due to the strong emphasis placed on the basic skills. Improvements were seen in the attainment of boys in all areas indicating that the school has successfully eliminated historical underachievement of this group. All other groups achieve equally well.

The overwhelming majority of pupils really enjoy their lessons. This is a major contributor to their good achievement, which was seen in the majority of lessons and evident in the results in tests over the past three years. A memorable example was a group of pupils taking great delight in using musical instruments, actions and sounds to focus on describing words for dragons, which enabled them to make rapid progress in creating complex poetry. The significant number of vulnerable pupils and those with other barriers to learning all achieve well due to the meticulous attention they receive and well-focused intervention, often delivered by skilful teaching assistants. A notable example was the good progress made by a pupil receiving additional support through sign language.

Pupils are confident that they feel safe and bullying is not an issue. They are also taught well about recognising dangerous situations, including those relating to new technologies. They can explain the benefits of exercise and healthy eating and many take part in the extensive range of opportunities for physical activity. One parent wrote, 'My child loved the Healthy Challenge Club and is very aware of why we need a healthy lifestyle from teaching and we encourage this at home.' Pupils experience good opportunities to engage with the local community, for example presenting very much appreciated gifts and musical events to residents in the nearby care home for older people. Strong links with the junior school ensure that pupils settle quickly when they move there.

Lessons and assemblies effectively exploit pupils' inquisitiveness and curiosity and wonder of the world. Pupils demonstrate good social skills and moral understanding in the way they show consideration for others and a clear sense of right and wrong. They

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show good understanding of people from different backgrounds, religions and cultures because the school gives them experiences beyond their own everyday lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| 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 | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

The quality of the majority of lessons is good or better. In most lessons, good subject knowledge; effective questioning; and a variety of interesting activities, which move with pace, all contribute to good-quality learning. In addition, highly effective teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The best lessons also use probing questioning to make pupils really think hard and teachers evaluate the progress for different pupils and use this to plan the next lesson for both individuals and groups. However, in the smaller number of satisfactory lessons, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher and pupils sometimes receive work that is too easy or too hard. In these lessons pupils become distracted and their progress slows.

Teachers generally use assessments well and this contributes to their good progress. Pupils in most lessons understand what it is they are expected to learn and through marking, feedback or intervention, are aware of where they have succeeded and what

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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they need to do to correct mistakes or further their understanding.

The curriculum has had a major overhaul following effective self-evaluation which highlighted weaknesses. As a result, subjects, apart from literacy, numeracy and science, are taught effectively through themes. Pupils have had a major input into what themes would interest them and this has had a positive impact on motivating and interesting pupils. Themes such as dragons, fire, castles, caves and dinosaurs have proved particularly appealing to boys and this has been a significant factor in the school's success in engaging boys well and improving their attainment. The school puts on an outstanding array of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, which are very well attended and greatly enjoyed by many.

A significant and rising number of pupils join the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or complex emotional issues which represent potential barriers to learning. A number of these pupils also present challenging behaviour. The school understands every child's individual needs. Due to exceptional care, guidance and support and outstanding partnerships with parents, carers and a wide range of external agencies, all pupils are able to make good progress both academically and in their personal development. No stone is left unturned to ensure that the needs of every pupil are met. The very small number of excluded pupils have been successfully reintegrated as a result of highly effective, personalised programmes and these pupils are now doing well. Other case studies reveal life-changing outcomes for individual pupils facing exceptionally challenging family circumstances. One carer summed up the views of many, 'I have found the staff to be some of the best I have ever worked with.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, other leaders and governors are dedicated to the academic and personal development of pupils. The social and other skills of pupils joining the school have declined in recent years and the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities has risen. Despite this, good outcomes have been maintained or in some cases improved. A sense of high expectation permeates the school due to the school's successes. Leaders and managers at all levels recognise where improvements still need to be made and have well-documented plans to secure these improvements.

Policies and procedures ensure equality for all and the elimination of all forms of discrimination. All groups of pupils achieve equally well. The procedures for child

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protection and safeguarding pupils, including staff training and awareness, are secure. The school community is strongly cohesive with the many differences represented, respected and valued. Pupils say that everyone gets on well with each other. The school has audited its own community, recognised that it does not reflect the diversity of the locality and the nation and has implemented effective links with a neighbouring school to extend pupils' horizons.

Governance is good because governors not only understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school but they have been influential in determining its direction, for example in promoting the appointment of a senior member of support staff with responsibility for supporting pupils and families needing multi-agency and other involvement. As a result, excellent partnerships are established with a wide range of other agencies, which greatly enhance pupils' learning and well-being. Governors are also rigorous in ensuring that pupils and staff are safe and discharge their statutory duties effectively.

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 | 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 | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well cared for and enjoy a good range of interesting activities. Many of these have been skilfully designed to motivate and develop the speaking skills of boys, which are considerably below those expected for their age when they enter. For example, all were extremely excited to write about what strange and wonderful creatures might have made the footprints they followed in a footprint trail through the grounds. As a result, the quality of their work improved.

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Children are generally working well within the early learning goals by start of Year 1. Although outcomes are lower in communication, language and literacy, they are above those expected in personal development. In all areas this represents good progress given their starting points. All outcomes have shown significant improvement over the past three years. Adults go to considerable lengths to involve parents in children's learning and, as a result, they are extremely well informed about children's progress and many become effective partners in learning. This very positive partnership underpins children's good progress.

Children gain a good understanding of how to stay safe, for example children could explain why they had to wear hard hats in the construction play areas and the importance of putting the baby on the safety seat when bathing. Children remind each other about having to wash their hands after toileting and before meals. They are willing to try a variety of different fruit.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader encourages all staff to take ownership by familiarising themselves with all aspects of planning and assessment for all stages of learning. She has a good knowledge of the strengths and areas for development and plans appropriate professional development. There is scope to develop outside activities further to enhance areas of learning. The school knows this and has appropriate plans to do so.

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 25 families returned a parental questionnaire. These indicate that parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. Praise from parents and carers with children with specific needs was also strongly positive. Parents and carers confirm the school has kept them well informed about their children's progress. The views expressed were closely mirrored by what was seen during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Longshaw Infant 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 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 15 | 60 | 9 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 17 | 68 | 8 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 18 | 72 | 5 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 18 | 72 | 4 | 16 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 18 | 72 | 6 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 18 | 72 | 6 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 18 | 72 | 5 | 20 | 1 | 4 | 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) | 15 | 60 | 10 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 15 | 60 | 8 | 32 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 13 | 52 | 8 | 32 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 14 | 56 | 10 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 17 | 68 | 7 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 20 | 80 | 4 | 16 | 1 | 4 | 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | 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.



23 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Longshaw Infant School, Crosby Road, Blackburn, BB2 3NF

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently. We greatly enjoyed meeting you. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us in your happy school. We have judged that yours is a good school.

You get a good start in Reception, and you progress well throughout Years 1 and 2. Your teachers make your lessons really interesting and you enjoy them. They put on a lot of extra activities for you and you appreciate this. Your teachers give you good advice so you know how to improve your work. You are growing up to be polite, very sensible young people with a lot of self-confidence. We were pleased to see how well you behaved and the way everyone gets on well with each other. Nearly all of you attend well and come to school on time. You are kind to one another in lessons and in the playground. Everyone in the school cares for you and looks after you outstandingly well. Adults in the school are fantastic at giving extra help to those of you who need it. The school is a very safe and happy place for you.

Your headteacher, all staff and governors are doing a good job. They are planning even more exciting improvements for you, which will make your school even better.

We have asked the staff to think about how to give you more opportunities to work by yourself and with others in a team, and to check how well you are doing with your work for yourself. We have also asked all teachers to set different work for you so that those that can already do something can crack on with harder things and those that still need more practice at something get the chance.

All the best for the future!

Yours faithfully

John Dunne

Lead Inspector

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