

Long Clawson Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120141
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	339612
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Jim Griffin

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	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Mike Coffey
Headteacher	Mr Trevor Walker
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, one of whom visited the school for half a day specifically to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. All the teachers present were observed, covering six lessons or parts of lessons. The majority of time was spent looking at learning. The inspectors held discussions with governors, the headteacher and other staff, a group of older pupils and with the School Improvement Partner. They looked at a range of other information, including data showing the progress made by pupils and samples of their work. Questionnaires returned by 31 parents and carers, 46 pupils and 11 members of staff were analysed.

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

- the progress of current year groups and the extent to which the previous, slower progress in writing has been addressed
- the evidence of pupils' positive personal qualities, including their attitudes to learning
- the consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school
- the impact of the monitoring work of senior staff on improving classroom practice.

Information about the school

Long Clawson is a smaller-than-average sized primary school located in the Vale of Belvoir. Following a local re-organisation in 2008/9, pupils now leave at the end of Year 6 rather than Year 5. The timing of admission into the Reception class has also been changed, so that all now join at the beginning of the school year. Most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and the headteacher teaches for two days each week. All pupils are of White British heritage and nearly all live in the local village. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than typically found. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than found nationally. The school has Healthy School and Activemark awards.

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

This good and improving school is ambitious to be even better. It already has some outstanding aspects, particularly the Early Years Foundation Stage and the links with parents and carers. The high level of confidence that parents have in the school is typified by comments such as, 'We could not have wished for a better start to our son's school life; our thanks to the headteacher and his staff.' The school is welcoming and has a strong sense of community. Pupils are very well cared for. They are exceptionally sure that they feel safe and that staff will help them should they have any worries. Pupils clearly enjoy learning and enthusiastically take part in the wide range of activities that the school offers. They work well together in lessons, and readily share their ideas and support each other's efforts. They make a good contribution to the school and local community through responsibly undertaking individual and wider responsibilities, such as serving on the school council.

Children start school with skills that are typical for their age and make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time they reach Year 6, attainment is above average in most years. Teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. Academic progress is already outstanding in the Reception class and the challenge is to develop a similar level of progress across the rest of the school; especially in science lessons, for example, as the set work does not always provide enough challenge for all learners.

The school is well led by the headteacher and other staff with responsibilities. Very strong teamwork is evident and morale is high. Senior staff know the school's strengths and weaknesses through self-evaluation that also involves the governing body. Governors provide a good level of support and challenge for school leaders. The school views the partnership with parents and carers as one where staff and parents have key roles in a shared enterprise. As a result, this partnership is exceptionally effective. Tracking data on pupils' academic progress is well used to raise standards. However, there are further opportunities to maximise pupils' progress. Progress targets are not always challenging enough for some individual pupils. Also, the reviews of pupils' progress by senior staff are early and late in the school year. Consequently, an opportunity is missed to influence progress in the middle of the year, when there is still time to have a significant impact. Nevertheless, the good progress made in improving writing standards, the successful addition of Year 6 and mostly accurate self-evaluation clearly show the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Further raise pupils' academic progress in Years 1 to 6, so that it becomes outstanding, by:
 - setting progress targets that are challenging for all pupils
 - providing more consistent challenge for all learners in lessons, especially in science
 - acting on the conclusions from more timely reviews of pupils' progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment overall in English, mathematics and science is usually above average by the end of Year 6, although there are dips in year groups with relatively high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The progress made by all groups of pupils is good, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. During the inspection, pupils were seen making good progress and achieving well. Work in pupils' books show that attainment and progress in writing are being boosted by the use of real life experiences, role play and information and communication technology.

Pupils greatly enjoy school life, both in and outside of lessons. They are keen to learn, behave excellently and work hard, thereby making a vital contribution to their good achievement. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay healthy. They are proud of their school and the opportunities it provides for them. Pupils make a good contribution to school life as members of the school council and through fulfilling other responsibilities, and take part in a range of local events.

Pupils' attendance is outstanding, with around a quarter of pupils having full attendance over a school year. They develop a good work ethic which prepares them well for the next stage in their education. Pupils are punctual, enthusiastic and work well in pairs and groups. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although first-hand experiences of life in a multicultural society are limited. The school has clear plans to address this matter.

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	2
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

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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The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils said that lessons are enjoyable and interesting and this is confirmed by inspection findings. Most lessons are well planned, although there is not always enough challenge for more able learners. The regular use of 'talking partners' contributes to pupils' subject understanding as they explain their thinking to others and gain insights from the views of their friends. Teachers check pupils' understanding by using focused questions, and the review towards the end of lessons is used well to reinforce and deepen learning. Marking of written work is effective in English. However, scrutiny of pupils' books showed that there is too little difference in the set work, especially in science, to challenge all learners.

In recent years, the curriculum has become more meaningful and enjoyable for pupils. The use of visits, visitors and residential trips plays a central part in this regard. These experiences are used well to inspire better writing, for example. All pupils learn French. A discussion with pupils established that while most liked their English and mathematics lessons, practical subjects were liked most by individuals. There is an excellent range of after-school clubs, covering a wide range of sports as well as musical instruments, such as the violin and clarinet.

The school provides excellent care and support for all pupils, including those needing extra support. The school has a track record of successfully integrating pupils with disabilities and those who had significant behavioural difficulties at the time when they joined the school. As a result, all pupils make good progress, not only in their academic learning, but also in their attitudes, confidence and relationships. Pupils say they know staff will always listen 'because they want what's best for us'.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1
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How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership, management and governance are all good. The headteacher provides an ambitious vision for all, centred on maximising the learning opportunities for pupils whilst rejecting any limitations imposed by the school's size. As a result, pupils enjoy the advantages of a small school whilst having the range of experiences more often associated with much larger ones. The levels of common purpose and teamwork among staff are high. Governors provide the right combination of support and challenge for the capable school team.

The very positive parental survey reflects how seriously parental concerns are taken and how effectively these are addressed. Nearly all parents attend the twice-yearly parents' evenings and remain in touch with pupils' learning through the 'learning logs', for example. The fundraising of the parent-teacher association extends the school's capacity to make improvements to the grounds and learning resources, whilst contributing to the very strong sense of community that prevails among parents, pupils and staff. The school values its partnerships with members of the local and wider community. It is an active member of the cluster of primary schools that feed into the local secondary school. These links enhance the classroom curriculum and also give pupils wider sporting and musical opportunities. Close links with the church foster spiritual growth. Safeguarding procedures are good and their importance permeates all aspects of the school's life. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. It has a clear action plan and evaluates success in terms of the impact on pupils and the community. Pupils' fundraising work, including support for a pupil with special educational needs in the Gambia, provides important insights on the wider world. The school's work to promote equality and tackle discrimination is good, and there is little difference between the overall achievement of different groups.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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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 join Reception with knowledge, understanding and skills that are close to national expectations in most areas of learning, but relatively strong in their personal and social development. They make rapid progress so that by the end of Reception, children's attainment is above national expectations in all areas of the curriculum, except writing where standards are broadly average. This is because teaching is very well pitched to build on where children are in their learning and children are keen to learn. Planning takes full account of children's differing needs and builds, wherever possible, on their interests. For example, early in the year each child decides on their topic for the 'Talking and Thinking' book. Interests vary from babies, butterflies and dinosaurs to firefighters and space. In some cases, this activity is credited with switching children onto learning and everything the provision has to offer. There is an excellent balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. The indoor and outdoor areas are very well resourced and children enjoy the exciting and varied activities on offer.

The quality of leadership and management is excellent, based on a common sense of purpose, excellent team work and a real delight in making regular improvements. Staff make frequent and careful observations of children's progress. These build up into well rounded assessments of each child that then provide the basis for planning the next steps in their learning. Parents are very positive about the new admission arrangements as well as their easy access to staff.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers' questionnaires show very strong support for the school, particularly for the safety of their children and the extent to which children enjoy school. Inspectors' findings confirm these views. In addition to the questions posed, a number of parents commented positively on the new admission arrangements to the Reception class, whereby all join at the start of the school year. There was no particular pattern in the

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few less positive comments and all were offered constructively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Long Clawson 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. The inspection team received 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 85 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	77	7	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	83	5	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	71	9	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	58	11	35	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	68	8	26	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	68	10	32	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)	17	55	13	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	71	7	23	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	52	15	48	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	48	15	48	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	65	11	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	74	8	26	0	0	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.



8 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Long Clawson Church of England Primary School, Melton Mowbray, LE14 4PB

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me and my colleague when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you, visiting your classes and looking at your work. You helped us to get to know your school and this letter is to tell you what we found during the inspection. Here is a list of some of the things we liked most.

The staff look after you very well and you feel very safe in school.

Children get off to an excellent start in the Reception class.

Most of you attain good standards and make good progress because you are taught well.

You enjoy and learn a lot from the interesting and exciting activities your teachers plan for you. You told us that you enjoy most of your lessons, with some of you particularly enjoying art, physical education and design and technology.

We were very impressed with the variety of after-school clubs that staff provide for you.

The headteacher and his staff manage the school well.

The school and your parents work very well together to make the school a better place for all of you.

The school is good and your headteacher wants it to get even better. We have asked the school to improve on the good progress you are already making, by:

- making sure you all have challenging targets and checking carefully how well you are doing.
- always giving you work that is challenging enough, especially in science.
- checking on your progress in the middle of the school year, when there is still lots of time for you to improve your work.

We are sure you will continue to work hard and help the school to go from strength to strength.

Yours sincerely

Jim Griffin

Lead inspector

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