

Lyncrest Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121922
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	340047
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Richard Cheetham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jenny Brooks
Headteacher	Mrs Sally O'Neill
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, parents and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, examined school documents such as records and plans, the questionnaires returned by 61 parents and those returned by pupils and staff.

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

- the achievement of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and those in Key Stage 2 to judge the effectiveness of the school's use of assessment data, the consistency of teaching and learning and pupils' understanding of how to improve their work
- the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- attendance trends
- the rigour and use of school self-evaluation by senior leaders and governors to secure consistent improvement.

Information about the school

Lyncrest Primary is an average size school which serves a suburban area of Northampton. Since the previous inspection, refurbishment as part of the private finance initiative has been completed, temporary classrooms removed and the school is now a settled one form entry although the number in each year group varies. Just over three quarters of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and the remainder from a range of other backgrounds. A small proportion speak English as an additional language. The school has around the average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a below average number of pupils taking free school meals. The school holds the Healthy School award. There is a newly formed, extended leadership team.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Lyncrest is a satisfactory and improving school which takes good care of its pupils, and provides an attractive and secure learning environment. Relationships are good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and resolve any difficulties in a friendly way. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and their attendance has improved to average. Pupils and parents agree that children enjoy what the school offers including the good range of extra activities.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in their academic work and this has improved in recent years in Key Stage 2 where progress until two years ago was unsatisfactory. By the time they leave, pupils reach average standards. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, especially those learning to write accurately and those learning to control their behaviour. However, the current rate of progress of all the pupils is uneven and largely dependent on the varied quality of teaching. The school has taken some steps to improve matters and recognises that inconsistencies in progress remain.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The school has successfully removed any inadequate practice and a few lessons are now outstanding. The school's efforts to improve teachers' lesson planning and their assessment of pupils' learning are now beginning to bear fruit in most lessons. However, work is sometimes not matched well to pupils' needs and the pace at which they work is occasionally too slow. At times, teaching fails to engage pupils' enthusiasm and the marking of work does not lead quickly to improvement. Some teaching does not build on previous assessments. In better lessons, pupils grow in confidence, understand the short term targets they are set; higher attaining pupils are given challenging tasks and they work with a will. Teaching assistants generally make a good contribution to lessons ensuring that pupils of differing abilities make at least the same progress as their classmates.

Pupils enjoy their responsibilities and carry them out reliably. They want to take on more. For example, the school council is asking for an increase in its budget to improve facilities further. They have a good involvement with the local community and are developing wider links such as a planned association with a school in New Zealand. Pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage in their education with satisfactory basic skills and increasing enterprise skills.

The school is now establishing a solid track record of improvement in standards and has a satisfactory capacity for further gains. It is not better than this because some systems for securing further improvement are being refined to become more effective. The extended leadership team is improving systems for tracking pupils' progress and

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monitoring teaching quality. They are starting to use this information effectively. Leaders ensure that the school works well with partners such as the local authority. There is an effective school improvement plan for the current year only. The school promotes safeguarding very effectively. It regularly reviews and updates safeguarding policies and procedures and is thorough in checking the suitability of adults who work with pupils. Governors are now more involved in evaluating the school's work than they were and are asking some pertinent questions about its performance. This monitoring and evaluation has ensured satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, but the process does not use evaluative benchmarks rigorously enough to pin point precisely where the school's efforts could have most effect. However, leadership has enhanced provision in its good Early Years Foundation Stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and further raise standards in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - - ensuring teachers make effective use of all available assessment information
 - - ensuring that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Use evidence gathered through observations and analyses of the school's performance to evaluate thoroughly the school's effectiveness and identify precise priorities for improvement.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and achieve soundly by age 11. They enjoy their school work especially when lessons have a series of varied, short tasks at which they can succeed and from which they can take encouragement. They work well together in pairs to discuss their ideas and generate questions. In a minority of lessons, too little is asked of them and they become passive and lack enthusiasm.

Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen from well below average two years ago and has been average since then. Progress in lessons is satisfactory but accelerates in Year 6. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds do at least as well as White British pupils. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level in English and mathematics is lower than the national average. Pupils make good gains in writing but make steady progress in mathematics problem solving. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is consistently average and pupils benefit from good teaching especially in Year 2.

Pupils say that they feel very safe in school, that bullying is rare and that if it does occur, they can turn to adults who will sort things out quickly. Pupils enjoy school, and as one boy commented, 'I like school because my teachers are nice and helpful.' Pupils' healthy lifestyles are supported well by healthy lunches either from home or school. There are varied opportunities for regular exercise. Pupils' views influence school

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development and their voice is heard clearly through the school council, surveys or through worry boxes which let them air concerns privately. Pupils acquire a strong set of core values. They know the difference between right and wrong, develop a strong sense of community and have a good awareness of the traditions and beliefs of our multi-cultural society. Their concern for others is shown in their charitable work and in the cards and presents they send to an ex-pupil when he is on an army tour of duty.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers make clear to pupils what they are to learn by discussing and displaying lesson learning objectives. These work well when they are specific to the lesson and less well when they are too general. Lessons are usually well organised and throughout them, teachers keep a track on pupils' progress by having regular checkups. Teachers' marking supports learning satisfactorily but it does not consistently result in improvement because pupils are given too few opportunities to build on the suggestions. The transfer of information between classes on what pupils know and can do is not used well enough across the school.

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 curriculum meets statutory requirements and promotes basic skills soundly. Pupils now have better access to information and communication technology than at the previous inspection. Pupils use this satisfactorily, for instance in compiling reports, taking photographs and making video clips. The school is beginning the process of modifying the curriculum to create more links between subjects so that skills can be practised in different areas. Out of school visits provide a good jumping off point for extended studies. For example, the younger children's residential visit to a farm to complements their work in school of growing and eating their own produce.

The care of pupils is at the forefront of the thinking of all the adults in school and is particularly appreciated by parents and pupils. The school ethos is to treat everybody with respect and this is typified by the good emotional support available to vulnerable pupils and their families. Parents work well with the leader of special educational needs provision to promote pupils' good progress through their involvement in progress reviews and support at home. Links with a wide range of outside agencies are strong and make a positive contribution to pupils' well-being and achievement.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	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 senior leaders have promoted satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and the extended leadership team is helping to accelerate this process by monitoring their areas of responsibility and leading improvement. A good example of this is the drive, led by a newly appointed member of the extended leadership team, on improving teaching and learning. This has systematically improved the quality of work in this area and all staff understand the need for further gains to make teaching consistently good. There are regular meetings with staff to check that all pupils are progressing well. These meetings ensure that extra support is put in place for any pupils at risk of falling behind.

Governors now take a more hands on approach to their role with regular visits to evaluate learning quality, to check on health and safety and to inform school planning. They are beginning to challenge the school satisfactorily about pupils' standards and have been effective in promoting better attendance. Their role in school self-evaluation is sound; they are not supporting the school's planning beyond one year. They have overseen the implementation of excellent policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils, such as governors' involvement in safe staff appointments. Leadership has

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ensured that the school is fully up to date with all aspects of safeguarding and enlists pupils' support in maintaining school vigilance. Risk assessments are exemplary.

Pupils' well-being and achievement are supported well by the school's considerate links with parents and carers. Parents have confidence in the school and appreciate the good quality information on the curriculum and on how they can help their children at home, for instance in the annual family challenge. They support the school generously with donations that have enabled it to enhance playground provision.

All pupils have good access to school activities. To promote equal opportunities there are subsidies for school trips and extra activities and these enable all pupils to access the curriculum. The school promotes community cohesion more strongly through its local links with schools and organisations than it yet does with those further afield.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

From below average starting points, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning, although a minority do not reach the goals expected by the start of Year 1. Children make good progress in their personal development, because there are good routines that parents and children understand. Children play, choose, share and learn well together. Parents are particularly appreciative of the arrangements for starting in the Nursery where children readily leave parents and are welcomed in preparation for getting straight into learning tasks.

Activities are based on careful initial assessments that are shared with parents and key workers. With this as a basis, staff then identify what children need to do next in their

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learning, taking into account children's interests and aptitudes. The learning tasks maintain a good balance between pupil choice and those that are adult led. The indoor and outside learning environments are richly resourced to provide a wealth of effective learning opportunities. These stimulate discussion and questioning that is fostered by the adults.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has successfully inducted a new teacher into the Nursery and they have worked hard to improve the learning environments to their present standard. The leader has clear plans for further development and good systems for judging the effectiveness of her work. The staff enjoy, and are well supported by, parental confidence. This builds on the assurance that children develop confidently as they are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

In the questionnaire responses, nearly all parents were positive about the school and what it does for their children. There was a strong response to the idea that their children enjoy school and that they feel safe. A few would like more support with their child's learning. Overall, parents are pleased with the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lyncrest Primary 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 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	70	16	26	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	64	22	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	49	27	44	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	44	27	44	5	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	51	27	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	51	22	36	6	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	38	35	57	2	3	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)	20	33	33	54	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	41	31	51	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	30	34	56	3	5	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	36	31	51	5	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	51	26	43	3	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	64	20	33	2	3	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.



28 September 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Lyncrest Primary School, Northampton, NN5 5PE

Thank you for making us welcome to your school recently. We listened carefully to what you had to say, in and out of class and your views helped us reach our judgements. We judged that yours is a satisfactory school that is improving, partly thanks to your work in lessons and the contribution of the school council. You and your parents like the school and how it helps you to improve and to stay safe.

These are the things we think the school does best:

- it is a safe place in which to learn and be happy
- it encourages you to behave well
- it caters well for those children who find learning difficult
- the Early Years Foundation Stage is a good place to learn and develop
- it encourages you to live healthy lives and to make a good contribution to your school and increasingly to the locality
- it teaches you to respect others, know right from wrong and understand people who are different from you
- it works well with your parents, carers and outside experts.

To help the school improve further, we have asked the senior leaders and governors to:

- improve teaching so that you make better progress and reach higher standards in English and mathematics
- check carefully how well you are learning so that they know exactly what needs to be improved.
- ensure you know how to improve your work.

Yours faithfully

Richard Cheetham

Lead Inspector

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