

Long Furlong Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123085
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340275
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Angela Kirk

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	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Bradley
Headteacher	Zaheer Ahmed
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited 12 lessons, during which eight teachers were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books, the school's monitoring and assessment records, safeguarding documents and those relating to health, safety and attendance. In addition 110 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, together with those returned by pupils in Key Stage 2 and staff

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

- pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics and science, and the extent to which recent improvements had started to reverse the decline over the past two years
- how well groups of pupils were performing, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, girls in mathematics, more-able pupils at Key Stage 1 and pupils who are at the early stages of learning English
- the effectiveness of governors in their role of challenging the school, given the decline in standards over the past two years
- the extent to which new senior and middle managers use data and the outcomes of their monitoring to give them an accurate view of the school's performance and the impact of initiatives in raising standards.

Information about the school

Most pupils at this average-sized primary school are from White British backgrounds, with only a few children from minority ethnic backgrounds, of which a very small minority are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in the main relating to moderate learning difficulties, is below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided for in a Nursery and Reception class. The school hosts the Badger after-school club, which is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection. Among its awards, the school has Healthy School status, the Sport Activemark and Investors in People. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2009, with two internal assistant headteachers appointed in April 2010.

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

2

Main findings

This satisfactory school is improving rapidly after a period of decline. The excellent leadership from the new headteacher, working closely with senior staff, governors and parents and carers, has secured many improvements. This has been achieved through rigorous monitoring, accurate self-evaluation and by addressing areas of weakness through a comprehensive school improvement plan. The school has demonstrated a good capacity to improve by halting and starting to reverse the recent decline in standards

The school engages well with parents and carers, who are overwhelmingly supportive of recent improvements. One parent summed up the views of the majority: 'Mr Ahmed has made a brilliant start. He is very honest and open about what the school needs to improve and is willing to involve the parents in the process. Very impressive.'

When children first start at the school, their attainment is in line with the levels of skills expected for their age. They make satisfactory and improving progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils learn actively and creatively. They are well cared for and respect each other. By the time pupils leave the school, attainment is broadly average. However, improvements in teaching and targeted initiatives have enabled pupils' satisfactory progress to start to accelerate, especially in mathematics and science.

Behaviour is good and makes a strong contribution to the positive ethos of the school. Pupils enjoy their education and a good level of individual care ensures that all pupils feel happy and safe. They have confidence that adults who look after them can help sort out any problems. Teaching is satisfactory and an increasing amount of good teaching is helping pupils to make better progress, but there are still some weaknesses to be addressed. It has improved through recent observation, support and professional development, but not all teachers keep the pace of lessons lively and consequently some pupils become disengaged and teaching assistants are not always used effectively by some teachers. Good practice in marking and feedback to pupils is not consistent throughout the school. New, detailed tracking of pupils' progress provides an accurate picture of how well pupils are doing and of those who need additional support. However, although the school uses this information well on an individual pupil level, it is not yet making best use of this data to check on overall trends and the performance of groups of pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, so that at least 80% of teaching is good (by July 2011) by disseminating and embedding the best practice by:

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- increasing the pace in some lessons to keep all children engaged and challenged with varied and interactive teaching
 - making good use of the skills of teaching assistants, especially during the main teaching session
 - ensuring that pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are given appropriate work to challenge them in all lessons
 - improving the quality and consistency of feedback to pupils to ensure that they know their strengths and next steps in learning.
- Make more effective use of the recent improvements in tracking data by using this information to evaluate initiatives and whole-school attainment and progress of year groups and of groups of pupils (by September 2010).

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

Attainment is broadly average. It is improving, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and upper Key Stage 2, where pupils are beginning to reach above-average standards. Achievement is satisfactory and there are no significant differences in the achievement of any groups of pupils. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning, although this can be adversely affected when teachers' expectations are not high enough. Current satisfactory progress is accelerating due to improved teaching and carefully targeted initiatives. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers, due again to effective targeted interventions and good support in lessons.

Inspectors observed a number of effective lessons where work was carefully set to challenge all pupils, including the more-able, to keep them fully engaged in their learning through good teaching and interesting activities. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were investigating the mode, mean, median and range of data, some using commercial information, others with data obtained from the internet, with the remainder collecting their own data in order to find the solution to a given problem. In Year 5, pupils were working in groups to design an advertising campaign for a new product of their own invention and used previously discussed persuasive language techniques to encourage people to buy their product. Pupils are polite and show respect and consideration for each other. Behaviour is good and instances of unacceptable behaviour are rare. Pupils know how to stay healthy and talk knowledgeably about a balanced diet and the importance of exercise, which they put into practice through the wide range of sporting opportunities offered by the school and 'wake and shake' sessions in class. Pupils undertake varied responsibilities, including work as part of the School Council, house captains and peer mediators. Their social skills are good, evidenced in their ability to listen well to each other and cooperate. Pupils have respect and understanding for each other and a good knowledge of other cultures, but opportunities for their spiritual development are very limited. Given the progress that pupils make in their learning and generally good personal development, they are adequately prepared for their next stage of education.

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' effective questioning and the use of talk-partners allow active participation in lessons that help to maintain pupils' interest. In a few observed lessons, the pace was too slow and teachers used insufficient modelling of language and skills to ensure that pupils' learning was sufficiently secure prior to any independent activity. As a result pupils' progress slowed. The very small minority of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are not always given work at the right level to secure good progress. Marking and feedback to pupils is inconsistent, although some good practice was seen during a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks. Pupils use carefully structured self-assessment criteria to support their understanding of how to improve their work. The curriculum is satisfactory and enrichment through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities is good. It gives teachers the scope to plan lessons that really aim to inspire pupils and involve them in exciting activities. For example, Year 3 pupils were challenged to use various scientific skills, including fair testing, to investigate the murder of the Easter Bunny. Pastoral care in the school is effective and is improving, especially in the provision for pupils needing additional support. Support for groups and individuals with a range of

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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learning and social needs has resulted in a range of improvements, especially in behaviour and progress. Attendance, although average, has fallen considerably recently, mainly due to parents and carers choosing to take term-time holidays and some persistent absences. Both of these issues have already shown an improvement since the school started to tackle them effectively.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides very good leadership and senior staff and governors share the strong ambition to improve the school further. In this, they are supported well by middle leaders, whose effectiveness in monitoring has considerably improved and as a result there has been rapid progress. Weaknesses have been systematically tackled, particularly those in teaching, and the actions taken reflect a shared vision for improvement. Since January 2009, governors have become significantly more aware and competent in their role as 'critical friend' to the school. They have appointed a new headteacher and have taken an important part in drawing up shared action plans to move the school forward. Governors are fully and systematically involved in self-evaluation and in challenging and supporting the school in order to tackle weaknesses. Safeguarding is secure and improving, but governors have not finished implementing their new cycle of reviewing and signing off all necessary policies. Data tracking is used well by teachers to set academic targets for pupils and to monitor their progress towards them, but the information is not yet used to inform strategic planning regarding the performance of groups of pupils. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. The school has already been successful in tackling the underperformance of some groups. As a result, outcomes are improving strongly and self-evaluation is accurate. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily and has begun to implement an action plan. Pupils are gaining a satisfactory awareness of different cultures and beliefs and get on well with their peers from different backgrounds.

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

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	
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children know how to stay safe and healthy. They are active and engage well with a wide range of learning opportunities, behaving and cooperating well. Opportunities for creativity and problem-solving in numeracy are strengths, but there are too few opportunities for staff to develop children's thinking in order to help them to make connections in other areas of their learning. Good leadership has already eliminated the relative underachievement of boys in some subjects and has started to accelerate the progress children make. Observations and assessments are used well in planning and all welfare requirements are secure. Outdoor learning is embedded well in all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Nearly half of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. Those who did were overwhelmingly positive about many aspects of the school, including how well the school is led and managed and pupils' safety and enjoyment. A small minority expressed concern about the amount of progress that their child is making at school, which inspectors support. However, as outlined in the report, progress is satisfactory and improving rapidly. A few parents and carers indicated that they would like more

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guidance to help them to support their child's learning. The school has good plans in place to provide this

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Long Furlong 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 248 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	53	49	45	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	59	54	48	44	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	22	80	73	4	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	14	73	66	17	15	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	15	14	87	79	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	14	71	65	21	19	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	25	78	71	4	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)	16	15	70	64	6	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	17	77	70	9	8	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	15	68	62	14	13	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	17	69	63	10	9	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	47	43	59	54	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	33	64	58	8	7	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). 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">■ 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.



29 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Long Furlong Primary School, Abingdon, OX14 1XP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. A special thank you goes to those of you who met with us to give us your views or completed the questionnaires. We were impressed with your good behaviour and how well you get on with each other. You told us how much you enjoy your lessons and earning 'golden time'.

Long Furlong is a satisfactory school, which is improving rapidly. You reach the expected standards in your English, mathematics and science by the time you leave the school and it is clear that your progress is accelerating. This is because of improvements your teachers have made in your lessons and due to the introduction of a number of initiatives in reading, writing and mathematics to help some of you to catch up and others to be challenged with more demanding work. You told us how well the adults in school care for you and that you feel safe at school.

The staff at your school work very hard and they are committed to making the school even better. We have asked them to improve some of their assessment information so that they know how well different groups of you are doing, such as boys and girls. We have also asked them to improve teaching so that all your lessons are good or even better by:

- making sure that lessons keep everybody interested and challenged with varied teaching which involves you in lots of active learning
- using the teaching assistants more to help you during the main teaching part of the lesson (often when you are sat on the carpet)
- giving work to the children who are in the early stages of learning English that helps them learn English and other subjects better
- improving the feedback that they give to you in your books so that you know what you have done well and how to improve your work.

You can help by always doing your best work and choosing to take part in lots of the extra activities that your school has to offer

Yours sincerely

Angela Kirk

Lead Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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