

Leagrave Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131851
Local Authority	Luton
Inspection number	341234
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Mike Thompson

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	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Melvyn Butcher
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Featherstone
Date of previous school inspection	0 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent the majority of their time observing pupils' learning. In all, they observed all class teachers as they visited 21 lessons or parts of lessons and, in addition, observed eight intervention groups in which pupils are given extra help in order to address specific weaknesses. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of information, including data showing the progress made by pupils, and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaires returned by 132 parents, 100 pupils, and 44 members of staff were analysed.

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

- the achievement of pupils in Key Stage 1, particularly the White British, to determine whether provision is sufficiently challenging
- the impact of senior leaders in raising standards overall and particularly in Key Stage 1
- the impact of provision on the high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Information about the school

Leagrave is a large primary school located in a residential area in the north of Luton. A large majority of its pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the biggest of which comprise pupils of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African heritage.

The school judges that about 40% of all pupils are at an early stage of learning to communicate in English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. The majority of these pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and/or general learning difficulties. The number of pupils who either join or leave the school during the course of each year is much higher than the average for a school of this size. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average. There are two classes in each year group, except in Year 6, where class sizes are reduced by grouping pupils into three classes. The school has the Activemark accreditation, in recognition of its promotion of physical education and sport, and has 'Healthy School' status. At the time of the inspection, just over half of the class teachers were either newly qualified or in their second year of teaching.

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

Since their appointments shortly before the previous inspection, the headteacher and her deputy, ably supported by senior managers, governors, and the staff team, have transformed the school. The major challenges that needed to be overcome are being tackled effectively. These are in building secure foundations for long-term success by developing the expertise of staff while ensuring that older pupils do as well as possible before they transfer to secondary education at the end of Year 6. Despite changes in staff and the relative inexperience of some teachers, significant improvements are being made in provision. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, this is now of high quality and the impact is beginning to be seen in much higher attainment as children move into Year 1. Progress accelerates significantly in Year 6 because of the division of this year group into three classes, together with the addition of an extra teaching group for work in literacy. This arrangement enables pupils to benefit from a great deal of individual attention from highly effective teachers.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, the senior managers keep a very close check on the performance of each individual and ensure that extra help to tackle specific weaknesses is provided whenever it is needed. This is often achieved through intervention groups, which effectively boost pupils' performance because of the small numbers of pupils involved and the consistently good teaching provided in these sessions. Despite the good progress made over time, and the accelerated progress in Year 6, pupils' attainment is below average when they leave at the end of Year 6. Nonetheless, this represents good achievement from their low starting points when they joined the school.

Underpinning the school's success have been changes in staffing, a strong commitment to continuous improvement of the skills of the staff team, and the development of good relationships with parents. The school is at the heart of its community. Its many excellent partnerships, for example with the adjoining children's centre and the numerous sporting links, help make a real difference to pupils' lives. The school provides a good learning environment. Pupils attend regularly because they enjoy the wide range of interesting activities provided for them and because they are well cared for and feel safe. The teachers are generally good at managing pupils' behaviour and pupils' conduct in lessons and when moving around the school is testimony to this. The teachers successfully develop pupils' personal and social skills and are particularly good at building their confidence as learners. However, lessons do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop skills as independent learners. Teaching in whole-class lessons is sometimes not as effective in ensuring consistently good progress as it is in the intervention groups. This is because of the inexperience of some staff and because teaching in whole-class situations, rather than groups, provides fewer

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opportunities for pupils to receive individual attention. Overall, the rate of progress made by pupils in lessons is inconsistent. This is because the challenges provided are not always matched closely enough to the next steps in learning set out in the National Curriculum statements of attainment.

The school's evaluation of its own effectiveness is accurate because of the rigour with which managers monitor all aspects of its performance. Since the last inspection, there have been good improvements in the outcomes for pupils in Key Stage 2 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, despite the transformation in the school's overall performance, its capacity for sustained improvement is judged to be good rather than outstanding. This is because areas for improvement identified at the last inspection in ensuring that teaching and learning are consistently good and that pupils clearly know what they need to do to improve, have yet to be fully addressed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the tasks provided for pupils of different levels of attainment are sharply defined by matching them more closely to the National Curriculum statements of attainment, so that the next steps in learning are clear to all pupils.
 - Ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to develop skills as independent learners.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

It was clear from the lessons and intervention groups observed during the inspection that all groups of pupils, regardless of ability or background, learn well overall. In Year 6, learning is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. An analysis of data from national tests in 2009 suggested that, in Key Stage 2, pupils with English as an additional language did not do quite as well as their peers nationally. However, in all of the lessons and group tuition sessions seen, these pupils were making good progress in line with their classmates. For example, an English teaching group comprised just nine pupils, the majority of whom have English as an additional language. In this small group the teacher could ensure that each individual was fully involved in discussions and in an exercise to analyse and improve a passage of text. A strong focus in this lesson was placed on improving the vocabulary of these pupils. A similar close scrutiny was placed on the performance of White British pupils in Key Stage 1 and again, inspectors found little difference between their performance and that of their classmates. The evidence gathered by inspectors through direct observations was confirmed by a close scrutiny of the school's records of pupils' progress. The pupils currently in Year 6 are well on course to meet the challenging targets set for them and to improve on the standards achieved by Year 6 pupils last year. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as their classmates because of the impact of good quality help provided by teaching assistants in lessons and the impact of intervention groups. For example, the success of innovative work in using physical education to help raise attainment was evident in a Year 6 group. In one session, pupils successfully

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learned multiplication tables by using the rhythm provided by activities such as skipping as a vehicle for consolidating their knowledge of patterns in counting.

As well as ensuring good progress in Key Stage 2, the success of work done to improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now beginning to be seen in rising levels of attainment. For the first time, the realistic targets set for pupils by the end of Year 1 are in line with what is expected nationally for pupils of this age.

While pupils clearly know what they need to do to keep fit and healthy, they are the first to admit that they do not always put their learning into practice. Nonetheless, there is a high take-up rate in the wide range of sporting activities provided. The importance of physical education throughout the school, and its beneficial impact, are evidenced by the school having the Activemark and Healthy School status. The pupils are proud of their school, and the older ones in particular thrive on the many opportunities provided to take responsibility, for instance as prefects, members of the school council, or as 'peer mediators' by helping resolve disagreements between pupils. Overall, pupils make a very good contribution to the day-to-day life of the school. They are increasingly involved in activities that impact on the local community, such as a local adventure playground project.

A very clear moral code permeates all aspects of school life, and pupils are unfailingly polite and well mannered. Pupils' cultural development is a real strength. They display a high degree of acceptance of and respect for the wide range of cultural traditions evident in the school. Pupils' spiritual development was less evident to inspectors. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next phase of their education and for the world of work. Their good social skills and punctuality are offset by lack of independence in learning and below-average levels of skills in oracy, literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology.

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

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 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	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Inspectors were impressed by the teachers' good skills in managing their pupils and in providing clear explanations about new concepts. Teaching was good or better in the majority of the lessons seen and in all of the intervention groups. One of the many recent developments in teaching has been the use of success criteria in lessons. Teachers now routinely share the overarching learning objective with their pupils and also set out criteria by which they can measure the pupils' success in achieving the learning objective. However, too often the success criteria are the same for all pupils, rather than providing fine detail of the response expected of pupils at different levels of attainment.

The richness of the curriculum lies in the very wide range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils and in the development of a thematic approach to learning. Topics as varied as 'The world's greatest' - a study of the life of Mohammed Ali by pupils in Year 6; and 'Is it right to fight?', a topic based on the Second World War for pupils in Year 4, provide many opportunities for skills learned in English or mathematics to be practised. The impact is seen, for example, in pupils' improved skills as writers and also in their increased enjoyment of learning.

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that the school keeps their children safe. Highly skilled teaching assistants, many of whom are bilingual, provide valuable support for pupils. Typical of the school's commitment to ensuring the well-being of its pupils is the fact that it took over the management of the breakfast and after-school clubs in order to improve provision. This is greatly appreciated by the pupils, 'They help you with your homework and you get a really nice meal' typified the many positive comments made by pupils in the after-school club.

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
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

Most the parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that the school is led and managed well. The very clear direction provided for the school is strongly driven by the headteacher's ambitious vision for the future. A significant strength is the way in which the school ensures good continuity of leadership by enabling teachers to 'shadow' the work of subject leaders, and then work in partnership, before they take on responsibility for themselves.

The governing body is well led. Governors know the school and its community well and they take a close interest in the well-being of the pupils. They hold the school to account for its actions, but could make better use of the inspection evaluation schedule in order to provide even greater objectivity in their challenge.

Further strengths are the school's work to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination, which is implicit in all its actions, and the good procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils. The school's strong commitment to promote community cohesion forms an integral part of its improvement planning, and the impact of its actions is regularly evaluated.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	2
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

Provision has improved considerably since the last inspection because of the high-quality direction provided by the leadership. This is now resulting in significantly higher levels of attainment which, when children transfer to Year 1, are now broadly in line with what is

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expected at this age. Children show a keen interest in all aspects of their learning. This is because the staff have a very good understanding of the learning needs of young children and are good at providing them with a wide range of exciting opportunities for learning which capture their imagination. Planning is of high quality. Coupled with rigorous assessment procedures, it ensures that children make rapid progress, despite the barriers to learning provided by their limited knowledge of English and of the wider world. There is a good balance between learning directed by adults and opportunities for children to choose their own activities. The excellent links with parents encourage continuity of children's learning at home.

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	2
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

About one fifth of the questionnaires received had comments appended. The vast majority of these were highly complimentary, typified by one which noted: 'My daughter comes home every day telling me how much fun she has had and how the teachers help her if she struggles. She is learning so much and is enjoying it.' There were few negative remarks and no pattern to the negative views expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Legrave 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 132 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 428 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	58	53	40	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	79	60	50	38	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	67	51	59	45	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	57	43	67	51	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	63	48	63	48	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	47	61	46	6	5	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	45	65	49	4	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)	56	42	58	44	5	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	39	70	53	4	3	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	39	58	44	8	6	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	38	60	45	9	7	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	62	47	58	44	3	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	72	55	54	41	5	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.



3 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leagrave Primary School, Luton, LU4 9ND

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you very much for being so helpful when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed meeting you, talking to you and looking at your work. Your parents think that you go to a good school, and we agree.

Here is a list of some of the things we liked best.

You learn well in lessons and make good progress because you are taught well.

You develop your personal skills well. This is important in helping you to become good citizens in the future. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the way you get on well with each other.

You enjoy and learn a lot from the interesting and exciting activities your teachers plan for you.

We particularly liked all of the opportunities you have to take part in sports and games.

All of the adults in your school make sure that you are well looked after.

Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are doing an excellent job.

Every school has something that could be improved, and this is what we have asked your school to concentrate on to help you to do even better.

We would like your teachers to make sure that you know very clearly what you have to do to improve your work by setting clear targets for you to meet in lessons. I am sure that you are ready for this challenge!

We would also like your teachers to try to make sure that you have lots of opportunities to work by yourself and to become more independent.

I wish you great success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson

Lead inspector

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