

# Liden Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131901
<b>Local Authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	341245
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Hazel Callaghan

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	331
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Trevor Durrant
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Kohn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Liden Drive Swindon SN3 6EX
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons were observed, taught by 11 different teachers. Inspectors held meetings with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work, scrutinised a wide range of pupils' work and looked at a range of documentation such as minutes of meetings held by the governing body, the school's strategic plan and development plan and a range of policies, especially those connected to safeguarding. Eighty parent questionnaires were returned and scrutinised by the team.

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

- how the quality of teaching is being promoted so that teaching and learning become consistently good
- how teaching and the curriculum are ensuring all pupils make good progress, especially the most able pupils, those learning English as an additional language, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who join the school in all classes throughout the year
- how the current leaders and governors are ensuring that the school moves forward at a rapid pace.

## Information about the school

Liden Primary is a larger-than-average school. Most of its pupils come from families of White British heritage but an increasing number come from a variety of minority ethnic groups, many of whom speak English as an additional language. There is currently an above-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities but this fluctuates from year to year because of the above-average proportion of pupils who join and leave the school throughout the year. At present there is also an above-average proportion of pupils with statements of special needs, based on both their physical disabilities and learning needs. The school runs a breakfast club two mornings a week run by members of the school staff and hosts after-school and holiday clubs which are run by outside agencies. A privately run pre-school group is also situated in the school building. The school has successfully gained the Gold International Award and Healthy Schools Status.

There have been a large number of staff changes in the last year caused by a variety of circumstances. The headteacher is working part-time as he moves towards retirement at the end of the term. The deputy headteacher is currently acting head for part of the week and takes up the substantive post of headteacher in September. A new deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have also been appointed for September.

**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

Liden Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has come through a significant period of change and, over 2008 and 2009, both standards and progress fell. This decline has been addressed this year and there is clear evidence of improved teaching, faster rates of progress and rising standards. This term, there has been a stable staff team and, although new staff are to join the school next term, effective systems have been put in place which are well embedded and provide a secure base from which the school can continue to grow. The new senior leadership team has laid a positive foundation for the development of good teaching. It is satisfactory overall at present but there is evidence of good teaching in many lessons.

After two years of inadequate achievement, pupils are now making satisfactory progress across the school and the most recent test results show that standards have risen to broadly average. Standards in English and science are stronger than those in mathematics, but these too have improved, although they remain below average. This picture of improving progress is at its best in Years 5 and 6 and in Year 2; progress is slower in Years 1, 3 and 4. Much thought and time have gone into developing a curriculum that motivates pupils' interests and desire to learn. It is having a positive impact on all pupils. Activities, such as the day a knight in armour rode into school, are memorable. They stimulate huge delight and enquiry which are followed up effectively by staff so that pupils' skills and knowledge at many levels are increased.

The exciting curriculum, along with the improved teaching, is what is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Children make a positive start to their schooling in the Reception classes, where staff work well with those in the pre-school groups to build on prior learning. The transition into Year 1 is less effective because many children still need the style of learning they experienced in the early years and they find moving to more formal learning difficult. Similarly, some pupils find the transition into Key Stage 2 difficult. Progress continues to be made, but the importance of making the appropriate levels of progress at all stages is not always fully appreciated and this means staff and pupils have to play 'catch up' in some year groups for pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable by Year 6.

Pupils' personal development has also improved. The school's strong focus on developing healthy lifestyles has resulted not only in the school gaining Healthy School status but also in pupils being far more aware of the need to make positive choices. Pupils feel safe in school and know they are well cared for by all the staff. Very good systems of support for pupils new to the school and those who are seen as vulnerable in any way mean that they settle quickly, and strategies to give them support in their learning are successfully employed. Consequently, some pupils make good progress,

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particularly those with significant levels of emotional or learning needs. Those with English as an additional language enjoy their activities and are enabled to make similar progress in their learning to their peers. The school is a harmonious community where pupils actively take responsibility. They get involved in all sorts of projects that contribute to the smooth running of the school and to the life of others less well off than themselves. The behaviour of most pupils is good and they show care for one another, but when lessons are not as effective in holding their interest, or teachers' expectations for their good attention and application are not made clear, pupils show a lack of concentration and low-level disruption occurs.

Over the last year, the new senior leadership team has grown in strength and confidence. The acting headteacher, with the full support of the retiring headteacher, has introduced an effective system of tracking pupils' standards and progress, which is focusing everyone's attention on identifying what needs to be improved. New strategies for teaching and learning have been introduced. Both these changes are having a positive impact on progress and standards. Comprehensive systems for monitoring the work of the school are effective and the senior leadership team's accurate evaluations are helping staff to identify what needs to be improved. With a new headteacher and extended senior leadership team in September, the school community sees this as a new beginning. The commitment to improvement is clear but the capacity for improvement is no better than satisfactory until staff knit together as a truly effective team.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise standards in mathematics especially for the most able pupils by increasing the challenge provided in their work.
- Increase rates of pupils' progress especially in Years 1 and Years 3 and 4 by:
  - extending the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum into Year 1 so that activities better meet pupils' learning needs and levels of maturity
  - setting clear markers for pupils' rates of progress in Years 3 and 4 so that staff and pupils are able to work steadily towards the expected outcomes in Year 6.
- Improve the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by:
  - sharing the good practice in the school
  - ensuring the good work in helping pupils to understand how to improve is consistently applied
  - raising teachers' expectations for pupils' concentration and involvement, and for the pace, quantity and presentation of their work

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

Standards in the recent national tests have risen in both Year 2 and Year 6. The results are unvalidated but evidence from lessons and from pupils' work confirms that pupils are making more effective progress and standards are in line with those expected for their

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age in most classes. Pupils show interest in their tasks and, where teaching is effective, their progress is good. The oldest pupils in particular work well together, they want to do well and ask searching questions in order to understand new work fully. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils worked well in pairs discussing their findings, offering opinions and collaborating together to present their results. Most pupils apply themselves well and when there are high expectations for their work and progress, they respond to this well. Where progress is less effective, this is often due to the lack of clear expectations for pupils' listening and involvement. Their attention wanes and this is when behaviour is seen to slip. Pupils welcome the targets they are given for the next stages of their work and the teachers' comments in their books as they see these as helping them to improve. They use their skills effectively and are satisfactorily prepared for their next stage of school and life of work.

Pupils in Year 6 have grown into confident and mature young people who are aware of and sympathetic to the needs of others. Their moral standpoints are clear to see and they are questioning and evaluative of social dilemmas. The curriculum appropriately helps pupils to learn and understand about different religions, and the school uses the various backgrounds of pupils in the school to celebrate differences as well as similarities. Despite this good practice, pupils' spiritual development and their awareness of the diversity of cultures in the British Isles remain merely satisfactory. In contrast to this, pupils' contribution to the school community and to the local and international community is good. Pupils took an active part in the interview process for new staff and showed a good awareness of what was required and the ability to analyse their thoughts. They show a good understanding of the importance of supporting sustainability in their gifts to people less well off than themselves, choosing to donate fruit tress to communities who have little ability to grow food, for example.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>
	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Improved teaching and a creative exciting curriculum are having a positive impact on the learning of all pupils. Good links with many outside agencies and businesses, as well as visits, support this progress well. Well-structured lesson plans that build effectively on pupils' previous learning and activities and that interest the pupils, along with clear guidance on what they are to learn and how to improve, are all having a positive impact. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the teacher used an investigation into mean, mode and medium range using information about England's football players. The activities were fun, and well matched to pupils' abilities. Boys and girls concentrated well and worked together to solve the problems. Good practice is seen in many classes but many of the staff are still new to the school and so some of the systems are not consistently employed. Pupils' work is appropriately matched to their age and ability but sometimes the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged, especially in mathematics. Use of the school's marking system and the setting of targets for the next steps in learning have resulted in pupils understanding how to improve, but what pupils are to achieve in each lesson and the expectations for the quantity and quality of work are not always made sufficiently clear.

Relationships through the school are positive. The systems of support for pupils and their families are very good and the school successfully helps parents and carers to access help when it is needed. Increasingly, the school is involving parents and carers in all its activities so they are developing a good understanding of what their children are learning and how they can support them. The recent Health and Fitness week, which culminated in a huge family picnic, is an example of how parents' contribution is promoted in support of pupils' learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and new senior team, with the support of the local authority, have been successful in improving teaching and learning, with the result that standards and achievement have improved. The senior leaders due to join the school in September have been chosen for their skills which will complement those already in the school and help to continue the pace of improvements.

The skills of the governing body have increased as they are better informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have been heavily involved in the appointments of new senior leaders and have a secure grasp of what the school now needs in order to improve further. They are appropriately involved in monitoring safeguarding procedures. Along with the many very good systems for supporting pupils and their families, procedures for ensuring pupils are safe and well cared for are good. The school has built many strong partnerships with outside agencies to support the education and personal development of the pupils and there are strong links with the pre-school and the Chalet Special School on site. The inclusion within the extended school's cluster and the local pyramid of schools also provide many education advantages for the staff and pupils. The staff know their school and local communities well and all children are enabled to find success whatever their background and ethnicity. Effective global links have enabled the school to achieve the Gold International Award and there are growing links with a number of other schools with more diverse communities, so promoting community cohesion effectively

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception classes with the usual range of skills and knowledge but a greater proportion than is found nationally are below expected levels in their personal and social development and in communication and language development. They make satisfactory progress overall to reach slightly below-average standards but achieve well in the development of their reading and writing skills and in the aspect of calculation in mathematics. This is because the staff have focused particularly on these aspects of learning. The teaching of letters and sounds is well structured and there are many opportunities for children to write within their play activities as well as in adult-led tasks. Good links are made with families before children start school and these are consolidated once they enter Reception. Similarly, good links with the pre-school settings mean that children settle quickly. Children enjoy school and are willing learners. This was clearly demonstrated when a group of children eagerly measured how much their bean plants had grown. They persevered and concentrated hard on their task even when they had many other enjoyable activities to choose from. Effective questioning supports and develops children's learning. Teaching assistants contribute to the children's learning and well-being, but their roles are not clearly defined. Many improvements have been made to the learning environment since the new Early Years coordinator took up post. The outside area has been remodelled and developed. It is not yet finished but there are plans for it to become a reflection of the learning areas inside the classroom and so give children additional opportunities to experiment and explore outside. The curriculum is well structured, but the coordinator plans improvements by using children's interests more fully. Under the leadership of the new coordinator, the Early Years Foundation Stage is well set to improve even further.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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	3

## Views of parents and carers

The number of responses to the inspection questionnaires was not very large given the number of pupils in the school but this may be because the school sent out its own questionnaire this term which was based on the same questions. The response to the school's questionnaire was greater and there were more positive responses than those returned for the inspection. Although most of the responses to inspectors were positive, there were a small number of parental concerns that came through. One was to do with

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the behaviour of pupils. The inspection found pupils' behaviour to be satisfactory. Pupils say that when there are upsets, staff are quick to deal with them. Another concern shown by parents and carers was for the number of changes in teachers in some classes. This was also of concern to the headteacher and governors, who did their best to reduce the impact of staff changes. The third main concern was to do with pupils' progress. This was a legitimate concern in the recent past but one that is now being addressed. The teaching staff team has been stabilised and pupils' progress is improving throughout the school, with the result that standards are rising once more.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Liden 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 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 319 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	40	42	53	6	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	49	37	46	3	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	31	42	53	11	14	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	30	42	53	12	15	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	25	31	46	58	5	6	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	28	42	53	14	18	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	28	50	63	8	10	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)	19	24	48	60	8	10	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	30	40	50	11	14	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	23	39	49	15	19	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	24	38	48	16	20	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	27	34	40	50	9	11	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	35	40	50	7	9	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



9 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Liden Primary School, Swindon SN3 6EX

Thank you for making us so welcome and answering our questions when we visited you recently. We could see that you are proud of your school and what it does for you. We believe that you go to a school that is satisfactory at present but improving quickly.

Here are some of the things we liked best.

- You make a good start to your reading and writing in the Reception classes.
- You want to do well, and enjoy the fun activities you are given.
- Most of you behave well. You are polite, friendly and helpful. You enjoy taking responsibility and have done lots of things to help the school to be a better place and to help people around the world.
- Your teachers work hard to make sure that your lessons are interesting and help you to know how to be successful in your activities.
- The school is led well by the headteacher and acting headteacher and everyone works together well to help you. There is a good partnership with your parents and carers and others who can help you to learn.
- The staff look after you well so you feel safe and happy.

Even though Liden is improving in many ways, we have asked the staff and governors to do three things:

- help you reach higher standards in mathematics
- help you all make better progress by ensuring that those in Year 1 have the kind of activities that will help them learn and that there are clear expectations for progress for those in Years 3 and 4
- help teachers plan really effective activities that make you work harder and present your work well.

Thank you again for helping us when we came to the school. Remember: you can do your bit by working hard and trying to make your work neater.

Best wishes

Mrs H. Callaghan

Lead inspector

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