

Langdale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135204
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	341627
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2010
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheree Green
Headteacher	Carol Richards
Date of previous school inspection	5 January 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors spent the majority of their time on activities related to learning. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies, planning, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 173 parents, 99 pupils and seven members of staff.

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

- the progress of more able pupils, particularly boys, in writing at Key Stage 1 and the progress of average and more able pupils in mathematics at Key Stage 2
- the impact of the work of leaders, managers and governors in tackling weaknesses in provision to ensure good progress for all pupils
- the effectiveness of teacher assessment in planning the next steps in learning
- the quality of outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Langdale Primary is a large school serving an urban area. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, the majority having moderate learning difficulties. The present school is the result of an amalgamation of separate nursery, infant and junior settings in September 2008. As a result, there have been many changes in staff and governors, causing much disruption to the school. There have also been building projects to enable the schools to link together more cohesively. Childcare is provided on the school site, but this is inspected separately because it is not managed by the governing body.

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

Due to the amalgamation in September 2008, Langdale has been through a difficult period in establishing itself as a new primary school. Much needed work has been done to bring together the staff of different schools, to establish a full governing body and formulate new policies and procedures so that the school can move forward in making improvements to the provision, including the buildings. The focus on the management of change has resulted in a dip in the progress that the majority of pupils made last year. However, a newly formed senior leadership team, established in April 2009, has been instrumental in helping the school to focus securely on the academic progress of pupils. Through good self-evaluation, senior leaders have correctly identified the school's strengths and have put in place strategies to address areas of development. All staff are much more focused on the quality of learning in classrooms and this has resulted in the vast majority of pupils now making good progress overall. Children currently enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with expected skills for their age and attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2009 was significantly above the national average. Assessment is better focused to support target setting and pupils are catching up on the lost ground of the previous year. The school monitors the progress of all pupils well, although it does not sufficiently track the achievement of particular groups such as the more able. Nevertheless, the effective work of leaders and managers has clearly demonstrated their good capacity to improve.

Most lessons seen during the inspection were good. Work is matched well to pupils learning needs and teaching assistants are deployed effectively to give good support, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils enjoy lessons because the recently introduced creative curriculum gives them new opportunities to learn through the imaginative links between subjects. The school does not yet evaluate what is happening through the curriculum in order to continue its development. Pupils are well cared for and supported and this results in positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. In particular, their social and moral development is a strength of the school. However, their spiritual and cultural development is a relative weakness because there are not enough first hand opportunities to experience and reflect on other cultures and faiths. As a new primary school, governors are in the process of auditing its community cohesion. The current plan has successfully focused on the school community, although it is limited beyond this.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Improve the use of monitoring information to track how successfully different groups of pupils are achieving.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the new curriculum on pupils' progress.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion by ensuring that the results of the audit are translated into increased links with the local, United Kingdom and global communities.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual and cultural awareness by:
 - ensuring that pupils have first hand experience of other cultures through links with other local multicultural schools
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to experience spiritual development through assemblies and visiting a variety of places of worship.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The vast majority of pupils are now making good progress towards challenging targets and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities sometimes make even better progress. This is because of the positive intervention work they are given which supports their learning well. For example, a pupil who had been identified with poor writing skills has, through a variety of imaginative activities and exercises, made excellent progress. The school is still working to improve the provision in lessons for more able pupils who at Key Stage 1 were not achieving the higher levels in writing. In response to this, intervention groups to support the more able have been introduced to give them further challenge so that more should achieve Level 3 by the end of Year 2. In addition, extra support groups have been introduced into Years 3 and 4 to help pupils to catch up on lost ground. Early indications from pupils' books show that they are all making good progress towards this goal. Leaders have had an impact on improving the provision for numeracy at Key Stage 2. An analysis of test results has identified that pupils are less confident in the use of multiplication and division, so pupil targets currently reflect this focus. Teaching assistants have received further training to support pupils in numeracy and extra booster classes have been introduced for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Observations of numeracy lessons and work scrutiny both show that progress is now good for all groups of pupils. In lessons, pupils enjoy being challenged in their thinking and they are increasingly confident in explaining their own thinking clearly. The progress of boys was identified as an issue in the school and to address this, topics were chosen which have appealed to their interests. This has had a good impact on their learning, particularly in writing.

Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Staff are dedicated to helping pupils achieve their potential. Pupils are well aware of this and one commented on how 'the teachers are very nice and if you are struggling in lessons, they will always help you.' The majority of pupils say that they feel safe because their teachers look after them well. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles both in terms of exercise and nutrition, although they do not always make healthy choices for

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themselves. Behaviour is good and sometimes excellent in lessons; where there are isolated incidents of boisterous behaviour in the playground, these are dealt with appropriately. Pupils' attendance is good and this, coupled with the above average attainment, ensures that they are developing good workplace and other skills to contribute to their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Due to a clear focus on planning for the needs of all pupils, teaching has improved and is now good. In most lessons seen during the inspection, pupils were making good gains in their learning because teachers had planned interesting lessons and were making the activities relevant and purposeful. Although planning is effective in meeting the needs of pupils in most classes, in some, the challenge for more able pupils could be better. Teachers make effective use of ongoing assessment to plan future lessons, thereby helping pupils to make good progress. Marking is particularly useful because it encourages and praises pupils when they work well, but also helps them to know what they need to do in order to improve. Pupils are given targets to reach in writing and

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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numeracy and these are evident in classrooms and in books so that they are well aware of them. The teachers are very keen to try out new ideas and learn from each other, increasingly becoming a coherent team, working together for the good of all. There is a growing use of talking partners, which enables pupils to discuss ideas and learn together.

Teachers use clear questioning to help pupils develop good thinking skills. This is particularly helpful in the creative curriculum which brings together learning from different subject areas. The school has made a good start in linking subjects but this is not yet monitored to ensure that it continues to improve and develop even further. To support the curriculum, there is a good range of enrichment through a range of visits out and special visitors to the school. There are a number of extra-curricular activities for pupils to enjoy, although there is currently no recording or tracking of attendance at these to evaluate how effective they are or which pupils are benefiting from them. The school gives good care and support to pupils and, in particular, to those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, where effective links with outside agencies and families provide good support. Staff willingly take on extra training to support pupils with specific needs such as developing counselling skills.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The new senior leadership team has made a huge difference to the effectiveness of the school. Senior leaders have a unified vision to make the school a place where pupils, through more effective teaching, make even better progress and attain highly. Through analysis of test results, leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The good work of the leaders in improving writing at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at Key Stage 2 is ensuring that any gaps between groups of pupils are closing, promoting equal opportunity for all. Pupil progress meetings help to track how individuals are achieving. However, although interventions are introduced, these are not monitored carefully enough, particularly in terms of the various groups of pupils, to ensure that they make good enough progress over time.

The governing body has worked hard to formulate new policies and working practices and has given good support to the school. Governors have given appropriate challenge to the school in a variety of ways, although not in terms of pupils' progress. Nevertheless, they have identified this as an issue and training is already planned.

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Safeguarding is satisfactory at present and improvements to this are imminent. The school is conducting a new audit of its effectiveness with regard to community cohesion and has, rightly, identified that there is more to be done to ensure that pupils have a greater understanding of the wider world.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is broadly in line with national expectations. They make good progress in both the Nursery and the Reception classes so that by the time they leave, they all reach the early learning goals with some exceeding these. This, as in the rest of the school, has shown an improvement from the previous year due to the positive effects of the amalgamation. The effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has enabled the teaching to improve so that it is now good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the curriculum and ensure that all six areas of learning are addressed in a balanced way to meet the needs of the children. The outdoor environment is used well to support learning although the school has identified the need to ensure that children can access learning outside in all six areas to maximise its effectiveness. Relationships are good and adults are positive role models for children to follow. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities to ensure progression in learning whilst helping children to become independent learners. Assessment is used well to plan the next steps in learning. However, the school has recognised, rightly, that more needs to be done to ensure that there is a smooth progression from the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1 so that pupils can continue to build on their previous learning.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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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

Most parents were positive in their views of the school, with some making supportive comments about aspects of the school's work. A small minority of parents had concerns about a number of issues, which highlighted the lack of communication with parents about school decisions that had been made. The inspection team agreed with parents that communication with parents could be improved so that they were better informed about ongoing concerns at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Langdale 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 173 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 411 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	93	54	75	43	2	1	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	86	50	79	46	2	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	29	105	61	14	8	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	36	92	53	15	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	81	47	81	47	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	36	96	55	12	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	37	103	60	3	2	1	1
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)	57	33	95	55	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	38	90	52	13	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	28	98	57	15	9	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	29	92	53	19	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	60	35	81	47	16	9	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	40	89	52	6	4	3	2

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 pupils' 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.



27 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langdale Primary School, Newcastle ST5 3QE

Thank you for the warm welcome we received when we visited your school this week. It was good to talk with you and watch you at work.

You go to a good school where your teachers work hard at making your lessons interesting and fun. You all told us how much you enjoy coming to school and like your teachers and it is easy to see why. You make good progress in your lessons and by the time you leave the school, you should have good skills in literacy and numeracy.

It is good to see that you know about how to keep safe and healthy and it is important that you remember to keep to these rules in order to stay that way. Most of you behave well and we know that there is support available for those who find this hard.

The teachers who lead your school have been working hard at making sure you all get work that is right for you. We have asked them to check regularly to make sure that all groups of pupils make the same amount of progress.

You told us that you enjoy the new curriculum that started in September. We have asked your teachers to check that it is helping you to make as much progress as possible in lots of areas of learning. You can help the teachers by letting them know how well you think you are doing.

We also want to make sure that you have a good knowledge of the wide variety of communities not just in Newcastle, but also in the United Kingdom and across the world. This will help you to understand what life is like for people of other cultures and faiths.

Thank you for giving us such a happy two days. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Shears

Lead Inspector

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