

Lighthorne Heath Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125530
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	343792
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Rodney Braithwaite

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	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Blackburn
Headteacher	Jeanette Hiatt
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited eight lessons and observed four different teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, governors, staff and local authority advisory officers, and spoke informally to parents. They looked at the school's work, and documentation relating to the attainment and assessment of children's progress, the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation, school policies, minutes of governors' meetings and the provision for safeguarding. They also looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed 17 parental questionnaires, other written responses to the school from parents, and written responses from pupils and staff.

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

- how effectively the school has developed new assessment procedures in order to monitor pupils' progress more accurately
- whether the use of data information in teachers' planning is leading to satisfactory or better teaching
- the extent of pupils' understanding of their learning, their learning targets and how to improve their work
- whether the school has developed a clear strategy for community cohesion which makes a positive contribution to pupils' development.

Information about the school

Lighthorne Heath is a very small village school. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, with a majority having moderate learning difficulties. There is a privately run Children's Centre on site. There is a consultant headteacher in post, appointed in January 2010. The school is in an advanced stage of joining in a federation with a nearby school. The school has gained several awards, including Activemark and Healthy Schools status.

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

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Lighthorne Heath is a satisfactory school. Since the last inspection, it has made increasing progress in several key areas and proved that it has the capacity for further improvement. This is because the consultant headteacher has given the school decisive leadership in all of the areas identified as in need of improvement. In particular, this has led to better learning and progress for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Progress and achievement are now satisfactory, and pupils enjoy their learning, which is reflected in their good attitudes in and out of school and their continued good attendance. Far more precise strategies for the assessment of pupils' learning are in place, and are being used more effectively in teachers' planning. Importantly, pupils have a greatly improved knowledge of their learning and how they can improve. This is because there has been an improvement in teaching, which is now satisfactory. However, there is still not enough good, stimulating teaching which can stir the imagination and enthusiasm, especially of the older pupils. There has been commendable improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children enjoy a happy, welcoming and exciting environment with a particularly inviting outside learning area. This has helped children to make increasingly good progress, with the assistance of good teaching and support. A further improvement and strength of the school is its good care and support for pupils, especially those in the most vulnerable circumstances. The school has developed more effective provision for community cohesion which has helped pupils to have a much better awareness of the diversity of their own and other communities nationally and in the wider world. The school's self-evaluation of its progress and priorities is becoming far more analytical and accurate. The local authority has offered, and continues to provide, good quality support to the school in its efforts to improve.

Children join the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age. They make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage so that, when they enter Year 1, a majority of them are attaining the standards expected for their age. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress throughout the school. There are some variations in subject attainment across sometimes very small year groups but, generally, pupils are now reaching the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The wider use of writing and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum is increasingly supporting the development of basic skills.

The school has benefitted from strong leadership recently, but has not fully developed other senior and middle leaders sufficiently to share the many responsibilities amongst a

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small staff. The governors make a satisfactory contribution to the management of the school, ensuring that the requirements for safeguarding are fully met. However, they realise that they must have greater visibility in the school, react more decisively to parents' and carers' views, and challenge the leaders of the school more effectively than in the past.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the role of governors in the management of the school by:
 - encouraging more active dialogue with parents, following up their concerns and informing them of outcomes
 - developing greater confidence in challenging school leaders about outcomes and improvement.
- Strengthen the recent improvement in teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that a greater proportion of teaching is good rather than satisfactory, and uses the positive attitudes and enthusiasm of pupils to better effect
 - increasing the rate of progress of more able pupils, by ensuring that their work is consistently challenging.
- Develop a wider structure of distributive and experienced leadership across the school by ensuring middle managers have clear responsibilities and guidelines, and are clearly accountable to senior management for leading improvement.
- Approximately 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

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

Learning and progress in Years 1 and 2 are steady and improving, so that a majority of pupils have average attainment in reading, speaking and mathematics, although writing is still below average. In Years 3 to 6, attainment has varied in the last few years between average and below average. As a result of action taken by the school this year, attainment is more consistently average in each subject. Reading and speaking have shown the most improvement, and fewer pupils are lagging behind. However, few pupils are reaching above average attainment, although some more able pupils are making faster progress as a result of new intervention strategies. Satisfactory learning is enhanced by the positive and enthusiastic attitudes of the pupils. They focus hard on their tasks, exemplified by pupils in Years 5 and 6 analysing texts about the life of Nelson Mandela, and independently researching for further evidence of his leadership of South Africa. They are always very eager to join in discussions and answer questions. Pupils have good relationships with each other and work well independently and in groups. Nearly all behave well and are patient and understanding if other pupils become agitated.

Pupils indicate strongly that they feel safe in school and have adults to turn to, and

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appreciate that, as one said, 'I am safe with visitors to school if they have a badge on.' Pupils know how to stay healthy, care for each other and are not perturbed by any isolated case of bullying because they say that this is dealt with fairly by staff. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. They are keen to take on responsibilities on the school council, but are not given enough responsibilities around the school. Pupils now have a much clearer understanding of their worth and place in the community, and a greater understanding of the wider world. Their spiritual development, although satisfactory, lacks planned opportunities to encourage better outcomes.

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is now satisfactory with some elements of good practice. The most recent monitoring of the school identified weaker elements as teachers not having high enough expectations and not using assessment information effectively enough. Teachers have made improvement in these aspects, resulting in a corresponding improvement in pupils' achievement. Assessment systems are accurate and challenging, and realistic targets for

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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pupils' learning and progress have been set. This has resulted in better learning for all groups of pupils, and greater pace in lessons when pupils are much more involved in discussions and their learning activities. Intervention programmes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now improved because of well focused support from teaching assistants and the support centre manager. Pupils' speaking skills throughout the school are being encouraged which is helping their language development. This was seen in Years 1 and 2, when pupils enthusiastically explained to the class their methods of problem-solving involving different combinations of numbers. In the last six months, the introduction of a new assertive behaviour strategy has led to a decrease in incidents of challenging behaviour, and calmer and more enjoyable lessons for pupils. There is still not enough good and exciting teaching in order to accelerate the rate of progress and enable more pupils to reach above average levels of attainment.

The curriculum is suitably matched to the needs of the pupils and is developing better creative learning opportunities. The school is better linking different subjects across the curriculum, such as the historical narratives pupils in Years 3 and 4 are writing about Boudicca. This is also linked to healthy eating through a study of a Roman banquet, and ICT is used for historical research. The curriculum is enriched by the provision of a range of well-supported extra-curricular clubs, activities and visits. The exchange visits to a school in the Black Country have helped pupils' better understanding of community cohesion. This is also helped by the provision for the teaching of both French and Spanish. Partnerships with other local schools have been expanded and are helping pupils' learning and personal development. However, too few opportunities are planned for the development of pupils' spiritual education.

Pupils are well supported, guided and cared for by staff, who have a good knowledge of the needs of all individuals. The school is much improved in the speed with which it initiates programmes of support for the most vulnerable and needy pupils. This is shown by the recent introduction and development of nurture provision for pupils. There are good links with the local high school which enable pupils to make a smooth transition when they leave.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Since her appointment, the consultant headteacher has shown enormous energy and

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skill in driving improvement in the school at an increasing rate. Her communication and leadership skills have enabled her to encourage a responsive staff to steadily overcome the weaknesses in some aspects of the school's development. She has led rigorous management of teaching and learning, which has clearly identified the way ahead, especially for teachers, in order to improve pupils' learning. This has led to significant improvements in major issues for the school, and provided a solid base for the proposed federation next term. Partnerships with other institutions and care agencies are contributing well to the development of pupils' learning and well-being. Community cohesion is better understood, and promoted more effectively, to benefit pupils' learning and understanding. There has been progress in promoting equalities and inclusion by tackling gaps in attainment and achievement, especially that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school community accepts though that there is still much to do in order to move on from its present satisfactory situation. The responsibilities and skills of middle leaders are not sufficiently developed in order that they can independently drive consistent improvement.

School governors make a satisfactory contribution to management and have increased their understanding of the improvements needed in the school, and their role in supporting this. They realise that, in the past, they have not been challenging enough of school leaders, and that the school was allowed to drift. Additionally, parents, most of whom have a positive view of the school, have not always had their concerns dealt with effectively by governors. The present governors have ensured that statutory requirements for safeguarding and health and safety are met satisfactorily, and are preparing for federation with enthusiasm and optimism.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in the Nursery, and an increasing number are making good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress is good in children's personal and social development. Children are very happy, enjoy learning, are safe and are developing self-confidence and independence. They are given many opportunities to develop their speaking skills, such as their exciting discussions about dinosaurs and watering plants. Children have good relationships with each other, and are learning to share and choose sensibly.

Children enjoy learning in the stimulating and busy outdoor areas, which are well matched by the good quality resources in the spacious classroom. Teaching is good, and the children are well supported and cared for by the teacher and teaching assistants. The assessment of children's learning is satisfactory, although not consistent in identifying progress made in all areas of learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory and draw well on external guidance. There are good relationships with parents who appreciate day-to-day contact with key workers, who have a good understanding of the needs of their children. One parent commented, 'I have seen a great boost in my child's confidence and social interaction.' Parents are also pleased with the transition of children into Year 1.

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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About a quarter of all parents and carers responded to the questionnaires. Caution should be exercised when considering the responses. This is because the small number of replies means that each response counts for approximately 6%. Inspectors also took into account conversations with parents and their views expressed in recent questionnaires distributed by the school. A large majority of parents and carers show strong support for the school. All feel that their children are kept safe, and nearly all feel that their children know how to keep healthy, that the school meets the needs of their children, and is led and managed effectively. A few parents and carers have concerns about some teaching in the school and the management of some challenging behaviour. The inspection team finds that the school is aware of these concerns. It has taken effective steps to improve teaching, and new behaviour strategies have led to

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improvement in the behaviour of the very small minority of pupils who have given cause for concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lighthorne Heath 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 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	6	35	7	41	3	18	1	6
The school keeps my child safe	10	59	7	41	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	6	35	8	47	2	12	1	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	2	12	10	59	5	29	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	4	24	7	41	5	29	1	6
The school helps me to support my child's learning	3	18	11	65	3	18	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	29	11	65	1	6	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)	3	18	7	41	4	24	2	12
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	12	12	71	3	18	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	24	8	47	1	6	4	24
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	29	10	59	1	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	5	29	9	53	2	12	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	5	29	7	41	3	18	1	6

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.



24 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lighthorne Heath Primary School, Leamington Spa CV33 9TW

We would like to thank you for welcoming us when we visited you recently. It was good to see how much you enjoy school, and how you try to make it better through your school council. You go to a satisfactory school which has improved in the last year. You are well looked after and cared for by all the staff, and it was pleasing to hear so many of you say you could go to adults if you had a problem. We think that your attainment is about what it should be in reading, writing and mathematics.

You are lively and friendly, and it was good to see how much more confident you are when speaking in class. It was very impressive to hear so many of you telling us what your learning targets are. Make sure you work hard to achieve them! You know how to keep healthy and safe and care for each other well. The children in Nursery and Reception have a lovely classroom and outside area which helps them to learn well.

Although your school has improved, we think it can continue to improve. We have suggested to your teachers and governors how we believe, with your help, they can do this. We have asked that the school governors are in touch more with your parents and carers, and that the governing body makes sure that the school continues to improve.

We would also like teachers to make your learning as exciting and enjoyable as possible and make sure that all of you make as much progress as you can. Finally, we would like the school leaders to share their responsibilities, and make sure that the school continues to improve. You can help by telling them how you think things are going.

You are going to have a very exciting time next term when you join with another school. We hope that you enjoy it and continue to work hard, and enjoy your lovely school field.

Yours sincerely

Rodney Braithwaite

Lead inspector

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