

# Long Sutton Church of England Primary School

Martock Road, Long Sutton, Langport, Somerset, TA10 9NT

**Inspection dates** 12–13 December 2013

|                                |                      |              |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Outstanding  | 1        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good         | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement for all groups of pupils has improved significantly since the last inspection. Attainment in Year 6 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils are now making better than expected progress, particularly in writing.
- This is because the effective development of teaching skills has raised the quality of teaching so that it is now consistently good, with some that is outstanding.
- The marking of pupils' work is a particular strength. It is ensuring that pupils are very sure how to improve their work, enabling them to make more rapid progress.
- The behaviour of younger pupils in lessons has improved considerably. They are attentive and listen carefully to the teacher. This supports their learning very well.
- Pupils feel very safe and well cared for. They enjoy school because teachers plan lively and interesting lessons.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong and is a major contributory factor in pupils' very positive attitudes to learning.
- The determined leadership of the headteacher, along with help from senior teachers and active governors, has improved the quality of education substantially over the last two years.
- The whole school community is now a strong team focused upon a drive towards excellence in all areas of the school's work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils are sometimes over reliant on adults and have too few opportunities to use their own initiative when finding things out or using what they have learned to solve problems.
- The existing outstanding teaching practice is not yet shared sufficiently well across the school.
- Some middle leaders do not have all the skills they need to lead and manage the raising of achievement in their subject.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons and observed five teachers. She also talked to learners about their work and heard pupils read, including individual pupils from Years 2, 3, 4 and 6.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement, the action plan for the new sports funding, records of monitoring the quality of teaching and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and ages.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A telephone conversation took place with the school adviser from the local authority.
- Questionnaires from 16 members of staff were analysed. The inspector took account of the views expressed by parents and carers in 25 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and comments during informal meetings with parents and carers before school.

## Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Long Sutton is a smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils attend from the local area. All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs supported at school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent or carer in the armed services, is average.
- There is a small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups, none of whom are in the early stages of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There are breakfast and after-school clubs run by the school.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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

- Improve teaching further by:
  - developing pupils' thinking skills so that pupils are able to plan, find things out and apply what they have learned
  - sharing examples of outstanding practice more widely across the school.
- Improve the skills of all middle leaders to enable them to effectively monitor and analyse pupils' progress and plan the next steps in pupils' learning so that they raise achievement further in the subject for which they are responsible.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The skills and knowledge pupils have when they join the school vary from year to year, but aspects of language and communication and mathematics are usually below the levels expected for their age.
- Teaching in the Reception class is lively and learning is fun. Children make good progress because tasks are thoughtfully planned, well organised and active. Regular exciting 'Wellie Walks' encourage the children's curiosity exceptionally well as they visit the village shop and local farm to learn about the world around them.
- Exemplary records are kept of children's progress and these are regularly shared with parents, carers and children throughout the Reception Year.
- Letters and sounds (phonics) are taught particularly well across the infant years and, as a result, the national phonics screening test shows that pupils in Year 1 reach well above average standards. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 learn spelling rules quickly and confidently apply them accurately in their writing.
- By Year 6, standards in writing are above average. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and has been partly achieved by concentrating on sentence construction and the technical use of grammar in writing. Pupils have a 'toolkit' for writing that contains very clear steps for each task so they are able to check for themselves how well they are doing as they write.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and say that learning to read well is taken very seriously at school. Most pupils enjoy reading and are keen to discuss their favourite authors. They read fluently with expression from books appropriate for their ages. They approach unfamiliar words with confidence and younger pupils use with ease the strategies they have been taught to help them to decode words such as 'telescope'.
- Pupils are making better progress in mathematics, because the school has changed the way it organises mathematics lessons so that learning more accurately meets the needs of the different ages and abilities in each class. It is also ensuring that tasks are relevant and interesting and that all teachers use the same language for mathematics and follow the same way of teaching number.
- Pupils' work shows that through different topics, such as the study of 'Light' in science and the 'Tudors' in history, pupils are beginning to plan and assess their own learning, thereby preparing well for the next stage in their education. However, they do not yet have sufficient skills or confidence to do this on their own.
- Pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs make similar progress from their starting points as all other pupils. Teachers and highly skilled teaching assistants support them very well in class and they are fully included in all that the school offers.
- Interventions for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, such as one-to-one and small-group help with literacy and numeracy in lessons and support for personal and social development are enhancing provision and are highly successful. Pupils' progress is more than the two levels expected between Years 2 and 6 and their attainment is above average. Consequently, the gap has closed between their attainment and that of all other pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- At the beginning of lessons pupils are given valuable time to review previous work that the teacher has marked. They respond well to the teacher's comments and quickly complete small tasks for improvement.
- The marking of pupils' work is a strength of the teaching. It is consistently thorough across the

school and is one of the key features of the good progress pupils are making.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and well-developed expertise, especially in teaching phonics, writing and mathematics. They make it very clear to pupils what they are to learn and remind them of their targets.
- Teachers question pupils skilfully, checking and probing pupils' understanding by asking pupils to explain their answers, especially in mathematics. Teachers are careful to choose pupils to answer questions, encouraging everyone to participate and not just those who put up their hand.
- 'Talk partners' are used effectively, allowing pupils to develop their ideas and enhance their social skills.
- Teachers take great care to provide pupils with the learning intention and the steps they must use to guide their work and measure their success. When pupils begin their tasks, helpful notes are already pasted into their books. This saves time so that learning moves at a good pace.
- Tasks are challenging and meet the needs of all groups of pupils. Extra tasks are provided so that pupils are beginning to find things out by researching, but some pupils still lack confidence when it comes to applying what they know to new situations.
- Teachers manage behaviour exceptionally well. A mutual respect exists between all adults and pupils and relationships are excellent. Pupils enjoy learning and teachers enjoy teaching.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils are exceptionally polite and well mannered. They behave attentively in lessons, move around the building safely and get on very well together on the playground. Older pupils enjoy looking after the youngest ones at break times. Behaviour at worship time during the inspection was exemplary. Records show that incidents of bad behaviour or bullying are rare.
- This behaviour is typical and supported by the views of parents and carers, pupils and adults in the school. Pupils have been involved in a review of the behaviour policy since the last inspection and discussed this sensibly with the inspector. They feel that the 'golden ticket' reward system has been instrumental in bringing about significant improvement.
- Pupils take a pride in their school and this can be seen in the high quality of presentation in their books. The responsibilities they are given provide very good opportunities for them to develop their personal and social skills. They enjoy serving on the school council and carry out a variety of jobs as monitors that help the school day run smoothly.
- The school ensures that pupils have a thorough understanding of internet safety and the different types of bullying and how to deal with them. There are different ways for pupils to let someone know if they are worried or experiencing a problem and pupils are very confident that they would be listened to.
- Attendance is average. The school has rigorous procedures in place to deal with pupils who find attending school regularly, difficult. However, further improvement is constrained by some parents and carers who take their children away on holiday during term time.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Since the last inspection the headteacher has determinedly pursued school improvement. Together with the senior leadership team and the governors, and despite considerable staff turbulence, she has built a strong team committed to a vision of excellence.
- Robust systems for monitoring the school's work inform the school of what needs to be done to raise standards and there are sharply focused plans to drive forward improvements.
- A new way of tracking how well pupils are performing has been implemented. The school knows precisely how well different groups of pupils are doing because of regular meetings to discuss the information and what needs to be done to help pupils make the best possible progress.
- One significant factor has been the drive to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers'

performance has been regularly and rigorously monitored using the national Teachers' Standards. As a result, teachers have received focused training and have eagerly embraced new methods that have refined their teaching skills.

- However, outstanding teaching is yet to be used sufficiently as a model of good practice and some middle managers do not yet have sufficient skills to lead improvement in their subject.
- Initiatives to improve behaviour, mathematics and writing have been successful in bringing about good progress and rising attainment. This demonstrates that the school has the capacity for further improvement.
- The school's creative curriculum is well planned and based upon the skills pupils need to learn in different subjects. Pupils say school is 'a fun place to be'. Learning is exciting and stimulating and enriched by real experiences, visits and visitors, and after-school activities. Pupils spoke of the residential visits as being particularly memorable and valuable because 'they bring you together'.
- As a result of new sports funding, teachers are increasing their physical education skills and pupils are enjoying a wider range of after-school sports. Participation is rising and helping towards pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are planned for and practised especially well, for example when using graphs in science and writing an account of the Battle of Bosworth Field in history.
- The work of the school is further enhanced by its strong partnerships with the pre-school on site, other local schools and the local community. Underpinning these valuable experiences is the very strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is the main reason for pupils' very good attitude to school life in general.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted very well and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. The governing body and the school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and that all requirements are met.
- Working with a Local Leader in Education has assisted with the rapid improvement the school has made since the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors monitor the work of the school well, meeting regularly with senior leaders, so they are very knowledgeable about areas for development as well as the school's strengths. They have attended appropriate training to improve their role and this enables them to ask challenging questions to help the school improve further. Governors have a good understanding of national and school information about pupils' progress, especially regarding the use and impact of pupil premium and sports funding. They set rigorous objectives for the headteacher's performance with the help of an external adviser and have received and agreed information about teachers' performance and pay progression. They carry out their statutory duties diligently.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School  |                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grade   | Judgement            | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

## School details

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 123835   |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Somerset |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 426764   |

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

|                                            |                                   |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                           |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                              |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                             |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 115                               |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | David Harding                     |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Lizzie Reynolds                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 18–19 October 2011                |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01458 241434                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01458 241272                      |
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