

Lionwood Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120955
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	380140
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2012
Lead inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Bradshaw
Headteacher	Sarah Shirras
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2009
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Age group	7–11
Inspection date(s)	15–16 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Nick Butt

Additional inspector

Edward Chomicz

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with parents, carers and pupils, two members of the governing body and a wide range of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including self-evaluation documents, strategic plans and other development plans. Inspectors scrutinised 61 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Lionwood is smaller than the average-sized junior school. The large majority of pupils are White British. A small minority speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is double the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Lionwood is a good school. It has made good progress since its last inspection because of the relentless drive of the headteacher and her strong leadership team in spearheading improvement. The school is not outstanding because there remains some variation in the quality of teaching and the governing body’s effectiveness is uneven.
- Pupils achieve well from their starting points. Attainment is above average in the current Year 6. Pupils have made particularly good progress in mathematics, which was an issue at the last inspection.
- Pupils typically behave well and say they feel safe at school. They have respect for one another, for adults and for property. Their attitudes to learning are good as they enjoy taking a full part in lessons.
- Teaching is mainly good, with a greater proportion of good or better teaching than was the case at the time of the last inspection. Teachers use a variety of methods to interest and engage pupils. Just occasionally work does not challenge all pupils. Reading is taught well throughout the school, but the older pupils do not spend enough time reflecting on books they have read. Not all pupils are aware how to improve their work in line with National Curriculum levels of attainment.
- The leadership of teaching is good, the result of much work to coach and support teachers in developing best practice. Leaders manage performance well, with careful self-evaluation and detailed strategic plans for improvement. The governing body is supportive, but does not always give the school a strong strategic lead or adopt a systematic approach to its work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teaching is good or better by:

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- setting work that consistently challenges all pupils
 - using marking to identify next steps in pupils' learning that are linked to National Curriculum levels of attainment
 - providing more opportunities for the older pupils to reflect upon their reading.
- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by:
- ensuring members of the governing body give the school a strong strategic lead
 - adopting a more systematic approach to its planned activities.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' learning is good in the classroom as they combine a desire for knowledge with a willingness to try new ideas. This was observed when Year 6 pupils investigated finding a formula for the area of quadrilateral shapes. They collaborated well and were keen to share their thinking. Pupils often have opportunities to assess their own progress and that of their classmates against success criteria they have drawn up together. This was evident when Year 5 pupils were writing diary entries from the viewpoint of a character, checking that they were using the past tense and setting out private opinions.

Pupils join the school with attainment that is a little below average. Most pupils make good progress so that they are often a term ahead in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 6. The pupils in Year 5 entered the school with low attainment, and are catching up rapidly, but their attainment is currently below expectations, especially in writing. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because work is carefully tailored to suit them. The impact of interventions is measured and support is adapted to ensure all pupils benefit from targeted support. There are no significant differences in the progress or performance of any particular group of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.

Pupils enjoy reading and confidently discuss the different authors they like. They are able to tackle new words using a range of strategies and have good levels of comprehension. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not made sufficient use of their reading journals to reflect upon books they have read. Pupils' attainment is above average in reading by the time they leave the school. Most parents and carers say that their children are making good progress, a view supported by inspection findings.

Quality of teaching

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The planned curriculum mostly makes good provision for pupils' different abilities and aptitudes. A pupil said, 'Teachers have lots of ways of teaching,' reflecting how staff employ a range of strategies to interest and engage pupils, including the use of technology. Teaching assistants often provide valuable support for groups and individuals. Marking is regular and well-intentioned, but does not always show pupils the next steps in their learning and is not always linked to National Curriculum levels of attainment, so that pupils can clearly see the progress they are making.

Teachers are usually clear what they want pupils to learn, and share the steps to success with them that will bring this about. Just occasionally the focus is on the activity rather than the learning and the pace of the lesson slows. Teachers use questioning well to extend pupils' thinking and move learning on. A policy of not simply asking for hands up means all pupils have to be prepared to give an answer when called upon to do so, and this makes pupils more alert during class discussion. This was the case when pupils considered what to include in some factual writing about the Egyptian boy-king Tutankhamen.

Most parents and carers rightly say that teaching is good, a view supported by the pupils themselves. Teaching has a positive impact upon pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as pupils work together well on tasks, and consider moral dilemmas. 'Forest Schools' work gives pupils the opportunity to learn in nearby Lion Wood, an awe-inspiring ancient woodland. When asked who owned the wood, a pupil replied, 'The animals and the trees own the wood.'

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say that there is no bullying of any kind, a view supported by most parents and carers. Pupils understand about different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying, and how to tackle them. They say they feel safe at school, and have a good understanding of how to keep safe. Pupils are involved in planning risk assessments for their trips out, for example to Lion Wood. Most parents and carers say that behaviour is good and pupils mainly agree with them. A few pupils in Year 5 commented on how some of their classmates had difficulties with behaviour but the school managed this well.

Pupils are friendly and polite, and eager to praise their school. They are proud of the still relatively new building, which they look after very well. They enjoy coming to school, so that attendance is above average. Pupils say that they feel confident about approaching an adult if they have a worry, and know that they will be taken seriously and their concerns dealt with promptly. They work and play together harmoniously and do not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has ensured that the way the school tracks pupils' progress is more rigorous and precise than it was at the time of the last inspection. This means that leaders and managers know exactly how all pupils are performing and how well

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different groups are doing in relation to all pupils nationally. Regular pupil progress meetings give senior leaders the opportunity to hold teachers to account for the performance of individuals and to check that the support being offered is having the desired impact. This has contributed to the acceleration in pupils' progress and the rise in attainment over the past year.

Senior leaders and middle managers monitor the quality of teaching and learning thoroughly and use professional development to help teachers to improve their skills. There has been a productive link with an outstanding school in London. The proportion of good or better teaching has increased as a result. The ambition and drive of the senior team ensures that the momentum of change continues apace and their vision is supported by the wider staff. The school has a strong capacity for further improvement. The governing body is very supportive of the school and has a good understanding of what it does well and what it can improve. However, members of the governing body are not as sufficiently involved as they could be in giving a clear strategic lead to the school, for example in developing the building as a hub for the community. They do not systematically monitor the impact of their work, for example in checking that all governors are keeping in touch with their link classes, or producing evaluative reports of their visits. Nonetheless, members of the governing body do ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met and that the school is a safe workplace for staff.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and relevant for pupils. Year 5 pupils did some interesting research into local Tudor rebel, Robert Kett, who camped near the site of the school, and teachers make good use of historic Norwich as a resource for learning. Each school day starts with a session of physical education to wake everybody up. Pupils read six contrasting class novels a year, which are often linked to their topic and provide exciting starting points for writing. Music plays a key role in the life of the school, whether in the recent production of 'Bugsy Malone' or in 'Lionwoodstock', a summer music festival the school hosted. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school, whatever their circumstances, and equality and the absence of discrimination lie at the heart of the school's work.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



19 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lionwood Junior School, Norwich, NR1 4HT

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently and sharing your views with us both in person and through filling in the questionnaires. We agree with you that Lionwood is a good school. Here are some of its strengths.

- You make good progress in your learning and your attainment is better than most pupils in other schools.
- You behave well and have a good understanding of how to keep safe.
- The teaching is good and you find lessons enjoyable.
- The school is led and managed well by the headteacher and her team.

For the school to improve even more we have asked senior leaders and teachers to:

- make sure that the work challenges all of you all the time
- show you how to improve in line with National Curriculum levels of attainment
- encourage older pupils to think more about their reading through their reading journals.

We have also asked the governing body to improve the way it works so that it can really help the school. You all can help by continuing to work hard and making good use of your reading journals.

Thank you once again for your help and my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt
Lead inspector

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