

Lawn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118264
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358293
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia McGrath
Headteacher	Angela Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed nine activities and four teachers and looked in detail at pupils' work in books. Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other staff with leadership responsibilities. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at range of school documentation including the school's self-evaluation form, monitoring records, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress records and safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 13 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- The effectiveness of leaders and managers in demonstrating a secure capacity to improve attainment, learning and overall achievement, and the rigour of monitoring and evaluation at all levels.
- Whether pupils achieve well enough during their time at the school at all stages, including pupils who join the school in later year groups.
- The provision and outcomes for pupils learning English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How effectively the curriculum meets all pupils' needs. How effectively the curriculum meets all pupils' needs.

Information about the school

Lawn is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are from White British heritages. The proportion that speak English as an additional language is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average as is the proportion of pupils who start at or leave the school other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than average.. Their needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Nursery and a Reception class. Extended provision is provided through a breakfast and an after-school club. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award. The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have been in post since September 2010.

During the two days of the inspection, adverse weather conditions resulted in the majority of pupils and some staff being unable to attend school. On the first day 31 pupils attended and on the second day, 29. This meant that the normal timetable was abandoned and pupils were taught either all together or in key stage groups.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to school as seen by their improved attendance since the last inspection and it is now average. Pupils are polite and friendly and keen to share their achievements with each other and adults. Behaviour is good and this was especially evident during the inspection when normal lessons and routines were disrupted and pupils had no opportunity to go outside on either day to play. Inspectors agree with pupils that the school provides good care, guidance and support, and as a result pupils feel safe. Good and trusting relationships between pupils and adults mean that pupils are confident to talk to adults should any problems arise. The work the school has done to gain the Healthy Schools award means that pupils have a good awareness of how to stay fit and healthy.

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make good progress from starting points that are well-below expectations, but attainment is low by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. This is particularly the case for the higher-than-average proportion of pupils who join the school other than at the normal starting times, on occasion with no previous schooling experience or from circumstances that make them particularly vulnerable. During their time at the school they make good progress, but often they are not there long enough to catch up with the gaps in their learning.

Although progress has recently improved, as seen in pupils' work and through the school's tracking procedures, expectations for pupils' attainment are not always high enough. For some pupils, even more rapid progress is required for them to catch up with their learning and achieve as well as they possibly can. Pupils make good progress because of good teaching and a good curriculum. Interesting lessons are planned so that pupils enjoy learning and always seek to do their best. They develop good attitudes and become competent and enthusiastic learners.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. Self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory and provide a broad picture of where the school is working well and the areas for improvement. There has not been enough time for new leaders and managers to embed their work. School improvement plans are not sharply linked to outcomes in order to narrow the gap between pupils' attainment and that found nationally. Effective monitoring has been successful in improving teaching. There is a lack of rigour, however, in identifying and addressing specific gaps in pupils' subject knowledge in mathematics and English, particularly in writing. This reduces the impact of the school's monitoring procedures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:

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- building on and further accelerating pupils' progress.
- ensuring that expectations are consistently high enough to enable pupils to reach their potential.ensuring that expectations are consistently high enough to enable pupils to reach their potential.
- Ensure monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning are more sharply focused on outcomes for pupils' attainment at all key stages by:
 - more rigorously identifying gaps in pupils' subject knowledge in mathematics and English, particularly writing.
 - taking actions to address the gaps and measuring the impact of these actions.taking actions to address the gaps and measuring the impact of these actions.

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

The unvalidated data from the national tests at the end of Year 6 must be interpreted with caution when making comparisons with national data. This is because of the very small number of pupils in each cohort and the proportion of pupils who join the school late. For example, in 2010, each pupil represented over 12% of the cohort and three of the eight pupils joined the Lawn just before the tests took place.

Pupils adapted very well to the changes in school routines during the inspection. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and their ability to work well together make an important contribution to their enjoyment of learning. They spoke of how they enjoy learning 'because it's fun and we do things and learn lots'. They demonstrated this in a mathematical activity where all ages were involved in making a number line. Their active learning resulted in good progress and understanding of the concept of ordinal numbers. In an English activity, pupils were motivated well by the use of video clips to help develop their letter writing skills. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with speech, language or communication or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties make equally good progress as their peers. This is due to sensitive and well-targeted support from all staff that ensures they are able to participate in learning using of a range of strategies to support this, including good use of visual prompts.

Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given. For example, school council members are proud of their contribution to expanding the range of equipment to use at playtimes and are keen to initiate the provision of bicycle racks at school to further promote healthy lifestyles.

Pupils make a satisfactory but increasing contribution to the local community, for example, they are working on a sculpture to be displayed in the local theatre. Pupils develop a caring attitude to others, promoted well by the inclusive ethos that prevails in the school. This makes an important contribution to their good moral and social development. There is an acceptance and understanding of the range of backgrounds and circumstances. One pupil, who had started at the school the day before the inspection said, 'I love the school already because the children and the teachers are looking after me.' Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils celebrate and learn about other cultures, faiths and celebrations in the curriculum and through assemblies, for example Hanukkah. Pupils are adequately equipped with skills for their future economic well-being.

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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	4
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

All adults work successfully to include pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, they are able to fully participate in learning and make good progress. Support is targeted well and there is close collaboration between the school, parents and carers and external agencies to build relationships with pupils and their families. Teachers know pupils' individual needs very well and provide many practical learning opportunities that successfully meet the learning needs of all groups. Consequently, there are no underachieving groups. There are good examples of marking that provides pupils with useful pointers about how to improve their work but this is not consistent across the school.

The curriculum promotes pupils' enjoyment and makes a notable contribution to pupils' good personal skills including their ability to work well together. Teachers plan activities well and often link subjects to make learning relevant and meaningful to pupils. The curriculum is enriched well to extend pupils' interests and broaden their experiences and meets their needs well in promoting progress in literacy and numeracy. Effective arrangements at all stages ensure that there is smooth transition for pupils moving through the school and there are good links with secondary schools to support pupils, parents and carers for the move into Year 7. The recent introduction of talk time, a provision for one-to-one time with adults, to which the pupils self-refer, is much

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appreciated by pupils. One said, 'It's good to know you can tell them your problems and they listen, they help you feel good about yourself.' Staff are prepared to go the extra mile for pupils, for example, camping in the school overnight so pupils could be taught the next day.

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?

Leaders and managers are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils and are alert to situations where more advice and guidance is needed. In this way, the school promotes equality for pupils and tackles discrimination in a suitable way. As well as the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, most other leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, are very new to their roles in the school. There is a shared ambition and drive for improvement with a renewed focus, energy and commitment to provide the best learning experiences for pupils. The impact of the work of leaders and managers is evident in, for example, the eradication of inadequate teaching and the new provision of breakfast and after-school clubs in response to parents' and carers' requests, which has had a considerable impact on improving attendance to average levels.

Links with an outstanding school are supporting the development of the school's good curriculum to ensure that there are further creative and independent learning opportunities. It is too early to see the full impact of the recent work of leaders and managers on pupils' attainment. They are aware that the momentum that has resulted from recent developments needs to be sustained to raise attainment, further accelerate progress and develop a more strategic overview of the key areas of the school's work. Systems and processes for monitoring are not consistent across the school and this reduces the impact they have on whole-school development. The school works well with the local authority to maintain a support network to sustain good teaching and progress.

Community cohesion is satisfactory. Leaders have developed the school as a cohesive community in which pupils show tolerance and respect for others. The school has continued to improve on the school's standing in the local community, which was very negative as a result of the school requiring special measures for a period of five years. This is seen in the increasing roll and a waiting list for several year groups. Since the beginning of this term, the school is responding to this renewed confidence in the school by providing afternoon as well as morning sessions in the Nursery and additional teaching staff in order to offer single-age Year 1 and Year 2 classes. The governing body is clearly committed to and supportive of the school. However, it lacks rigour in more effectively

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monitoring the impact of all aspects of the school's work, especially in relation to attainment and community cohesion.

The school meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding and has clear well-established policies that are well known by all staff and applied across all aspects of the school's work. Pupils' safeguarding is paramount in the school and the Chair of the Governing Body and the welfare manager conduct regular, in depth audits and reviews of the safeguarding procedures and act swiftly upon any findings. Staff appointments and vetting procedures are thorough and recorded carefully.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make steady progress from starting points that are well-below expectations for their ages, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Achievement is satisfactory although attainment remains below expectations when they start in Year 1 and considerably so in emotional and creative development, reading and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Children develop as active learners who enjoy the practical and interesting activities offered. Planning shows that there is a satisfactory balance between activities directed by adults and those where children can make their own choices. Children understand the need to keep safe and healthy, enjoy the fruit snacks and know why they wash their hands before they eat. There are positive, trusting relationships with the team of adults and children settle happily into school. One parent with a child in the Nursery wrote, 'My child really enjoys going to school and seeing his friends. If I have any worries all I have to do is speak to his teachers about my child and they always tell me how he is getting on.'

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Although not able to be used during the inspection, there is a good, well-equipped outside area for the nursery and reception children but its use is not systematically included in planning. Recently introduced home/school journals have strengthened the partnership with parents and provide the school with valuable information about children's development and achievements. Adults work well as a team and all are involved in observing and recording children's achievements to inform the next steps in learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has only been in post for a few weeks prior to the inspection and has correctly identified the need to ensure that there is continuity in learning across the Nursery and Reception classes.

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	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

As a result of the adverse weather conditions and the low number of pupils able to attend during the inspection, the inspectors received a very small number of the parents' and carers' questionnaires. All of those who were able to respond agreed that they were happy with their children's experience at school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lawn 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 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 157 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	7	54	5	38	1	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	7	54	5	38	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	4	31	7	54	2	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	3	23	8	62	0	0	1	8
The teaching is good at this school	4	31	9	69	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	4	31	6	46	1	8	1	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	46	4	31	1	8	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	23	9	69	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	15	8	62	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	15	10	77	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	31	9	69	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	4	31	9	69	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	54	6	46	0	0	0	0

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 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.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lawn Primary School, Gravesend DA11 9HB

I am writing to thank you for being so friendly and polite when we visited your school in all the snow. We are sorry that we did not see all of you, but we thought those of you who did get to school coped very well with the different routines to the school day because your normal lessons could not take place. You behaved very well and looked after each other. You told us how much you appreciated the fact that some of your teachers camped in the school overnight and cooked you a lunch so that you could be there.

Your school is satisfactory overall. This means that some things are good and some things need to be better. You are taught well and your teachers help you learn through interesting and exciting activities. They make sure that those of you who find learning more difficult and those of you who are learning to speak English as an extra language learn as well as everyone else. We agree with you that Lawn is a caring and safe place to be where everyone looks after you well. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and well done for coming to school more regularly because this means you are not missing out on important learning. Well done for understanding how to stay fit and healthy.

We have asked everyone in your school to do the following important things.

- Improve your levels in English and mathematics by the time you leave school. We saw that you are making good progress in your learning and your teachers should build on this, help you learn even more quickly and expect the very best from you.
- To make sure all the adults who lead and manage your school, including the people on the governing body, carefully check on everything the school does well and what needs to be better so they can make clear plans for improving your attainment.

You can help the school to improve by continuing to come to school regularly, working hard and doing the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector

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