

# The Laurance Haines Primary and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117320
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	363864
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Chris Read

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	506
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roger Gibbs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barbara Ridyard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Vicarage Road Watford WD18 0DD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01923 233146
<b>Fax number</b>	01923 219296
<b>Email address</b>	admin@lhaines.herts.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 17 teachers and 20 lessons. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and representatives from the governing body. Brief meetings were held with a small number of parents and carers and external support agencies. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its self-evaluation, improvement plan, monitoring reports and various policies. Inspectors also analysed 190 parental and carers' questionnaires, 100 pupil questionnaires and 44 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which strategies to improve teaching have contributed to raising attainment, particularly for boys in Key Stage 1.
- How much impact the recently restructured senior leadership team is having on improving rates of progress for groups of pupils.
- How well the school manages the induction of pupils, particularly those who speak English as an additional language, to ensure they make at least satisfactory progress.

## Information about the school

This is a large primary school serving a culturally diverse community. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in one of two Nursery classes. Nearly 80% of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which has Pakistani origins. Two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language, although very few are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils who arrive or leave part-way through their primary school education is above that found in most other schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Since the last inspection, there have been a substantial number of changes to staffing. The school has recently attained the National Healthy School Award status and received the Eco-Schools' Silver Award.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It has a number of strengths including pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and their contribution to the community, which are both outstanding. The focused and supportive leadership of the headteacher has helped the school to achieve good outcomes for pupils through a period of staffing changes. Staff are committed to contributing to the caring environment. The school knows itself very well. It can identify strengths, but is also very clear about what the priorities are for further improvement. The school can demonstrate where it has made improvements, not least in attainment and the quality of education it provides. With detailed improvement plans in place, the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Achievement is good so that pupils' attainment levels are lifted to average by the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, there has been an increase on previous years in the proportion of pupils who have reached the higher Level 3 or above. In addition to their academic progress, pupils develop good moral understanding and social skills, meaning that they behave well and are able to interact well with each other.

The school actively promotes the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, leading to outstanding outcomes. Pupils fully understand the need to eat healthily and to take regular exercise. In addition to developing teamwork skills through sport, there is an extensive range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility around the school. Pupils' excellent health awareness and community contributions are reflected in the awards held by the school. Assemblies are used very well to develop the strong sense of community in the school and to allow pupils to reflect on significant issues.

There is evidence of outstanding teaching within the school, but most lessons are of a good quality. Where teaching is at its best, planning is closely matched to pupils' needs and pupils' thinking and learning are extended with the help of incisive questioning. Such good practice is not fully consistent and the school is working to share expertise and spread best practice. Senior leaders are supporting staff to make better use of assessment information. Recent work to improve the curriculum has helped increase the interest and enthusiasm of pupils. All pupils are well cared for and this is a very important aspect of the school. Arrangements to support pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are well established and staff are alert to any pupil who may require additional support. Safeguarding is given a high priority and all statutory requirements are met.

The governing body plays an active role and has a good understanding of the performance of the school. Partnerships with other agencies are effective because the school is committed to seeking additional support for pupils to advance their learning and well-being. The school has an extensive range of methods to communicate with and involve parents and carers. The recently formed leadership team take on their roles with great enthusiasm and commitment. They are having an impact on improving rates of

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progress. However, they recognise that their monitoring and evaluation procedures are not sharp enough to ensure a more rapid pace to change.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that 90% is good or outstanding by February 2012 by: ensuring all teachers use assessment information to match learning activities to meet, precisely, the needs of individual pupils.
- Sharpen monitoring and evaluation processes and involve the newly formed senior leadership team to ensure improvement plans are implemented promptly.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' enjoyment of learning, as demonstrated by their eagerness to contribute their opinions and join in with class discussion, is a feature of most lessons. Pupils develop their understanding and extend their language as they are able to provide additional explanations for their initial ideas. When preparing to write, they confidently share vocabulary and add detail to their ideas as they work cooperatively with partners. While tackling number problems, pupils work collaboratively, identifying the key information and using their calculation skills to find the answers. Pupils show interest in each other's work as they assess it against given criteria. They enjoy using these conversations to make amendments and improvements to their own writing.

Children join the school with abilities that are lower than those typical for their age. Pupils make good progress, reaching attainment levels that are broadly in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has set targets to increase the number of pupils attaining higher levels and there has been an improvement. Those pupils from minority ethnic groups make good progress, overall, particularly in English. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, particularly in English. The pupils who join the school at the early stages of learning English quickly acquire important language skills, allowing them to take a full part in lessons. Arrivals after the start of the school year quickly settle and make equally good progress to that of other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enjoy carrying out activities that meet their individual needs and make good progress.

Behaviour is good and pupils say that they feel safe. Their excellent understanding of leading a healthy lifestyle is demonstrated in their eagerness to be involved in an extensive range of sporting activities. They are inspired by the range of opportunities available and the success of school teams. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the importance of diet and factors that affect their emotional health. There is an outstanding range of activities allowing pupils to make important contributions to their community, and they take up these opportunities with enthusiasm. Positions of responsibility within school, such as peer mediators and infant carers, are carried out in an exemplary manner. In addition, groups have been heavily involved in developing the school environment by contributing to the design of playground equipment and allotment areas. Pupils' contribution to the wider local community is excellent, including involvement with local charities and businesses. Attendance has improved and is above average. Pupils are able to reflect on significant issues, demonstrated in work throughout the school that provides activities and opportunities to reflect on loss and bereavement. Pupils talk sensibly about their feelings and show understanding of others, demonstrating good spiritual development.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

The school provides a welcoming learning environment. Pupils enjoy the most success where teaching skilfully uses assessment information to match tasks to their needs and provides targeted support from teaching assistants. However, this practice is not fully consistent across the school. In the outstanding lessons, the very positive relationships between teachers and pupils are evident in supporting progress. Activities are linked to the pupils' interests, and help boys to make progress in writing. Activities are usually well structured and include good-quality resources. However, teaching lacks consistency and, at times, it is no more than satisfactory. On these occasions, the deployment of teaching assistants is not maximised and planning of work is not always precisely focused on the needs of individual learners well enough to support good levels of progress. Marking helps children to move forward by identifying clear targets. Pupils have also acquired a good understanding of how to assess their own work.

The curriculum provides a considered balance between basic skills in English and mathematics and the enhancement of pupils' creative and performance skills, including sporting activities and music. Planning of work links different subjects and pupils are given opportunities to reinforce their learning and develop their skills through themes and topics. Skills, including the ability to work collaboratively and those related to independent study, are effectively developed. The curriculum is underpinned by good use of

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information and communication technology. Pupils' learning opportunities are enriched by a number of popular clubs, visits to places of local interest and the use of outside specialists. Individual pupils compete at county level in a range of sports.

The school provides good support for pupils' personal development and pastoral care. The quality of pastoral care is recognised and valued by parents and carers who confirm that the school has a clear understanding of the personal needs of pupils. Specific thought and attention is given to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, including those with medical needs or those exhibiting challenging behaviours. Plans are implemented by staff, enabling individual needs to be met. Significant attention is placed on the induction of new pupils with home visits and regular contact with parents and carers. A programme for pupils moving to the next stage of their education has also proved effective. Pupils who join the school at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language receive well-targeted support to assist their learning and to help them settle into school life. Consequently, they achieve well. Detailed assessment systems are being refined so that all adults in the school are aware of the groups in their class who need extra intervention to improve progress. Where this intervention is already in place, it has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have secured the commitment of staff and the governing body in working hard to improve the school. Strengths are celebrated, but the school is realistic and accurate in defining what will take it forward. School improvement planning rightly focuses on improving attainment and achievement through securing greater consistency in teaching and learning. The school places a strong emphasis on the professional development of staff and those who take on positions of responsibility are, currently, receiving good support. The school has established a range of effective systems to monitor performance and support improvement. Monitoring of lessons and gaining the views of pupils keep senior leaders informed about the quality of provision, although findings are not always used well enough to secure improvement. Analysis of assessment data on pupils' progress and prior attainment and identification of pupils' learning needs help teachers to target work to meet the needs of individual learners. However, this information is not used systematically enough.

The governing body ensures the school responds to the needs of its community. Consequently, the school provides many opportunities for pupils to gain a good

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understanding of people's backgrounds and communities in this country and abroad. Pupils' contribution to the school and local communities is excellent.

The governing body actively seeks the views of parents and carers and vigorously holds the school to account.

The school has a strong inclusive ethos, ensuring equal opportunity for all pupils. Consequently, the promotion of equality and approaches to tackling any form of discrimination are good. The school's close analysis of results of groups and individuals guides its actions in ensuring all learners achieve well.

Safeguarding systems are robust and rigorously applied. Detailed and well-organised procedures ensure that safeguarding arrangements are carefully followed. The school uses well established and reliable quality-assurance and risk-assessment systems. Local services and agencies are used well to enhance the safety and well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are many opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in the school, including regular coffee mornings and family learning workshops. These events help parents and carers to support their children's learning.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Staff work effectively as a team and successfully establish a welcoming environment in which children are nurtured and cherished from the start. There are good links with parents and carers so that children settle quickly and are eager to learn. Children join the Nursery with a narrow range of skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. They enter an environment that pays



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close attention to the use of language and key words that are linked to children's everyday experiences. Provision is good because the staff know the children well. This means the children move confidently between activities and relate well with all the adults with whom they work. Lesson planning is appropriately focused on the development of children's skills, although assessment procedures have yet to be firmly established to ensure that staff have accurate and reliable information about children's progress. Support is particularly good for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Support for those children who speak English as an additional language is equally good. Children listen attentively and chatter enthusiastically about their work. They happily move from one activity to another. The school makes effective use of both the indoor and outside areas, which provide a wide range of resources to develop confidence and promote independent learning. Questioning is often used well to probe the children's understanding and capture their interest. Themed topics ensure all areas of learning are covered, with a particular focus on early reading, writing and number skills. The effective leadership of the Early Years and Foundation Stage ensures provision is well directed and, consequently, outcomes for pupils are good.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of the responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were positive. A number of parents and carers made written comments and some of these expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. These included positive remarks about how happy pupils are and how parents and carers feel part of the school. However, some questionnaires recorded reservations over a few issues. These included the degree of communication between school and home. The inspection team looked at this during the course of the inspection. They judged that the range of methods the school uses to communicate with parents and carers, such as newsletters and an informative website, were helpful to gaining understanding of the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Laurance Haines Primary and Nursery 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 190 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 506 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	101	53	82	43	6	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	95	50	85	45	5	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	69	36	104	55	13	7	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	33	111	59	14	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	80	42	96	51	8	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	74	39	100	53	10	5	4	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	35	112	59	7	4	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)	62	33	105	55	10	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	29	110	58	14	7	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	28	106	56	17	9	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	25	111	58	13	7	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	72	38	99	52	11	6	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	41	100	53	6	3	2	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



20 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The Laurance Haines Primary and Nursery School, Watford, WD18 0DD**

Thank you for being so welcoming when we inspected your school. Thanks also to those of you who completed questionnaires to say what you thought of your school. We enjoyed talking to you at break and lunchtime and when visiting your lessons.

We were impressed by your good behaviour and the enthusiasm that you showed in lessons. It was clear from talking to you and the questionnaire replies we received from you and your parents and carers that you enjoy school and feel safe. You were very clear that you think that your headteacher and other staff do a good job. We agree with this and consider your school to be a good one. Some of you felt that behaviour could be better, but when we saw you working with your teachers we thought that behaviour was good. We were very impressed with how well you carry out jobs around the school, such as those of peer mediators and being members of the school and eco councils. We think this work and your involvement in the local community are outstanding. Also, your understanding of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle is outstanding because you respond exceptionally well to the encouragement you get in school to eat well and take exercise. This has helped your school teams to be successful in their sporting activities.

To make your school even better we have asked your headteacher to:

- make sure that the work you are asked to do in lessons is always just at the right levels to help you make even more progress
- ensure that those in charge of the school keep an even closer eye on how you are doing.

We know that you will do all you can to work hard with your teachers. We wish you every success.

Yours sincerely

Chris Read

Lead inspector

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