

The Laurels First School

Winterbourne Way, West Durrington, Worthing, BN13 3QH

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From low starting points in Reception, children make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain above the national average in mathematics and writing, and in line with the national average in reading.
- Those who are more able attain well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide effective support for pupils who have a range of needs.
- Year 3 pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good. Tasks are imaginative and pupils learn a wide range of interesting subjects.
- Behaviour is good, and pupils feel safe and secure. They say they enjoy their lessons and the extra activities and clubs provided by the school.
- The headteacher and governing body have continued to improve the quality of teaching and rates of pupils' progress year by year. School leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve.
- The governing body supports the school well and is clear about how to support the school to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not always outstanding because good practice is not always shared amongst all teachers.
- Mental mathematics is not regularly taught in all classes.
- Pupils do not write extensively in all subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 17 lessons and part-lessons, including nine joint observations with the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors heard pupils reading in Year 2.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair and other members of the Governing Body, and school staff. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of letters and 31 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as holding informal discussions with parents and carers who were collecting their children from school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and analysed a large range of documents and policies, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress and its planning and monitoring documents. They also examined records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The views of staff were analysed through the 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast club, which is run by the governing body.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Simms

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Laurels First School is larger than the average-sized first school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through additional funding called the pupil premium is average. Pupil premium is extra funding provided by the government for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Pupils are predominately White British.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding by:
 - sharing the good practice of outstanding teachers amongst all teachers
 - ensuring mental mathematics is regularly taught in all classes
 - making sure that pupils write more extensively in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress from when they join the school to the end of Year 3.
- Children enter the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are generally below those typically expected for their age, particularly in speaking, making relationships, writing and knowledge of the world. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of a strong focus on developing speaking skills. The Reception teachers build a very strong partnership with parents and carers, who are regularly invited in to share how their child is progressing at home. Parents and carers reported that they particularly liked being given the 'wow leaves' where they could write up their children's achievements at home. These leaves are then displayed on a tree in the classroom which children proudly referred to regularly.
- Throughout Key Stage 1, effective teaching enables pupils to make good progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain above the national average in writing and mathematics, and in line with the national average in reading.
- More-able pupils attain well and a higher proportion of pupils than average attains the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because work is always challenging enough for their needs.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with the quality of care and sensitive support their children receive.
- In 2013, those who were eligible for additional support called the pupil premium achieved in line with their classmates and all pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and they were a term behind their classmates and all pupils nationally in writing by the time they left. Gaps are closing rapidly in all year groups, because the additional funding is effectively targeted. Indeed, those eligible for pupil premium make better progress than their classmates in some subjects, for example in reading.
- Regular and efficient teaching of letters and sounds gives pupils a secure grounding in their reading and writing skills. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils attained the expected standard in the 2013 Year 1 phonics (the sounds letters make) screening check. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading and demonstrate the confidence to tackle unknown words.
- While achievement in mathematics is consistently good, it is not outstanding because mental mathematics is not regularly taught in all classes.
- Additional funding for sports enables pupils to achieve well in keeping fit. For example, the funding has been used to provide a fitness area.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school. Work in pupils' books shows that all groups of pupils make good progress because of the good teaching they receive.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the high expectations set by teachers for their children.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children can choose from a range of exciting activities and, as a result, they quickly become confident and enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils report that they like the way that their work is marked as it clearly shows them how to improve. As one said, 'Each time I get a piece of work marked it helps me with the next piece of work, so I can get better and better.' Another said, 'I like marking my friend's work as I can see what she has done well and not so well, and that helps me to get better too.'
- Pupils report that the homework they are set helps them to improve their spelling and research

skills.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported by highly experienced learning support assistants who know each pupil well. As a result, they give work that is just at the right level of difficulty to enable these pupils to make quick progress.
- Displays around the school and in classes encourage pupils to use adventurous words and write imaginatively. The clear wall displays in each class on how to add, subtract, divide and multiply were referred to regularly by pupils in their learning.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy the learning experiences offered by the Forest School. For example, they liked examining a woodlouse and how it appeared to have armour on its back. They related this to their fairy tale stories and how some of the characters also wore a form of armour.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because there are not enough chances for pupils to write extensively in all subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. At play and lunchtimes, pupils are happy, polite and well mannered. The values encouraged and the nurture provided ensure that all pupils feel confident.
- All staff have good relationships with pupils who, as a result, are enthusiastic learners. They want to learn and follow the teacher's instructions carefully. They answer questions readily and show a pride in their work in books.
- Pupils in Year 3 take on increasing amounts of responsibility for the smooth running of lunchtimes, which are calm and sociable in the small canteen. They also often act as buddies to those in the younger year groups. Other pupils act as eco-warriors and the Reception children wrote letters to a local supermarket to encourage more recycling after they had been on a walk around their local area.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage play considerately together. They have many opportunities to develop their social skills in sharing and taking turns.
- The school has a consistent and systematic approach to managing behaviour and, as a result, records show that there are few incidents of challenging behaviour. Any pupil who finds behaving well more challenging is well supported and guided. The school is keen to ensure that all pupils thrive and learn in an atmosphere of respect. A small number of pupils have had difficulties with behaviour and there have been a small number of fixed-term exclusions this year. Effective working with a range of agencies has ensured that all pupils now behave well.
- Attendance is above average and pupils arrive at school on time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in the school and know about keeping safe on the roads. Parents and carers are very confident that the school keeps their children safe and secure.
- Pupils have a good awareness of bullying and say that teachers would deal promptly with any issues, should they occur. Pupils know about the different ways that bullying can occur such as bullying on the internet.
- The breakfast club provides a good start to the day, which contributes to pupils' well-being.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and other senior leaders have been successful in securing good-quality teaching and, hence, the good achievement of pupils.
- The school's view of its own performance is accurate and plans show that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.
- Subject leaders monitor the work in their areas of responsibility effectively. They check pupils'

progress in their books regularly and put in place effective strategies to help those pupils who are not making as much progress as they could.

- All teachers have clear plans to continue to improve. However, as yet, the excellent practice of the outstanding teachers is not shared amongst all teachers.
- The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to be involved in all aspects of school life and to do well.
- The subjects the school teaches have a good focus on the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A wide range of sporting and artistic clubs adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. They talked enthusiastically about the forthcoming art exhibition, where their framed paintings were going to be displayed to parents and carers.
- Extra funding, such as the pupil premium, is used well to close the gaps in achievement between eligible pupils and their classmates.
- Funding for school sport is used effectively to provide a sports coach and games equipment. The local sports partnership also enhances the provision.
- The local authority provides a 'light-touch' level of support for this good school. The school also employs other external advisers so that it can make accurate checks on its effectiveness.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet statutory requirements. Staff are well trained about child protection.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The highly experienced governing body benefits from a range of different skills and expertise so that it is well placed to continue to support the school. Governors have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas to develop.
- Governors know about how well the school does when compared to other schools. They regularly visit lessons and so know about the quality of teaching. They have an accurate understanding of the link between teachers' pay and the progress made by pupils. Governors tackle any underperformance in teaching well and ensure that any increases in salary are on the basis of good progress.
- School finances and additional funding for the pupil premium and sports funding are well managed and carefully targeted to ensure good value for money.

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

Unique reference number	125956
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	431452

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Juliette Smithson
Headteacher	Amanda Dingwall
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2009
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