

The Laurels First School, Worthing

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125956
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	282029
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2006
Reporting inspector	Tom Shine

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Fox Mrs Judith James
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Winterbourne Way West Durrington Worthing West Sussex BN13 3QH
Telephone number	01903 830901
Fax number	01903 693076

Age group	4–8
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Laurels is a smaller than average first school situated in Durrington, although most of the pupils come from nearby Northbrook, which is a very socially and economically disadvantaged ward. Due to fluctuations in the number of pupils who enter the school each year, four of the six classes contain mixed-age groupings. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average, although they are not evenly distributed. In the current Year 2, for example, there is a much higher proportion of pupils in need of support than usual. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals has risen steadily over the last few years and is now above average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching and learning are good overall, although some of it is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge skilfully, particularly when teaching literacy and numeracy. In a numeracy lesson in one of the classes for pupils in Years 2 and 3, the teacher had high expectations that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, would respond well to a quick-fire session on mental mathematics. As a result of the rapid pace, they made good progress in replying to the problems set. Relationships between all adults and pupils are very good and, as a result, pupils are developing very good attitudes to learning. In less successful but otherwise satisfactory lessons, the pace of teaching is not rapid enough to maintain the interest of some pupils, who tend to lose concentration and do not make the progress of which they are capable. Teaching in the Reception classes is good. Lessons are well organised and managed, with a wide range of activities that meets the needs of the children well. The teachers ensure that their children are very clear about what is expected of them and remain motivated and interested in lessons. There are good systems for monitoring pupils' progress and the information they provide is generally used well to plan and review lessons so that they are well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are normally clear about what their targets are. There is a variety of ways used for providing feedback to pupils on their progress, including teachers' marking, which is generally good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum is good and caters well for the needs of all pupils. Teachers plan their lessons well and generally focus successfully on making the topics exciting and the links between subjects relevant. On occasion some lessons are not as exciting as others. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very well planned for both indoor and outdoor activities. It helps the children to take full advantage of learning through discovery and investigation. The stimulating classroom environment fosters children's interests very well. They benefit both socially and academically from working alongside Year 1 pupils. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and the more able, for whom extra lessons are provided. There is a good range of clubs, visits and visitors. For example, an African Arts week enriches their experiences through learning new skills, such as drumming and dancing. Music

and dance are strengths of the school and, in recognition of this, pupils have been invited to sing at Covent Garden and to dance in a local theatre.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

Care, guidance and support are good. The day-to-day pastoral care of pupils is very good and combines with effective academic guidance to provide support of good quality. Parents are very satisfied with the care and guidance their children receive. 'This is a fantastic school, we couldn't ask for anything better,' say a number of parents. Pupils say that they feel safe and happy at school and are confident that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with swiftly. There are very thorough procedures for child protection, and all staff are aware of their roles. The quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties is good and outside agencies and parents are involved effectively. The monitoring of academic performance is very good, including target setting and the tracking of pupils' progress to identify how well they are doing and where additional resources should be deployed. These procedures are relatively new and are to be refined to enable more effective use of the data.

Leadership and management

Grade:

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils Thank you very much for all the help you gave us when we came to your school recently. We loved talking to you and to your teachers and coming to your assemblies. Now we want to share with you what we thought about your school. These are the things we liked most about your school:

You make a good start to your education in the Reception classes.

You achieve well in reading, mathematics and science and your singing is very good.

You are all very friendly and polite.

You told us you feel safe and well supported.

Your headteacher makes sure those of you who need extra help get it.

You enjoy school and attend regularly.

You also behave and get on well with each other and with all members of staff.

You enjoy the wide range of out-of-school activities and clubs. But to make things even better we have suggested something that we think will help:

We think some of you could make more progress if you were asked to do even more interesting work. We enjoyed very much being in your school. Yours sincerely Tom Shine Lead inspector