



Laughton Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106882
Local Authority Rotherham
Inspection number 287637
Inspection dates 7–8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Philip Cole

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Road
School category	Community		Laughton-en-le-Morthen, Sheffield
Age range of pupils	3–11		South Yorkshire S25 1YP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01909 550477
Number on roll (school)	137	Fax number	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Trevor Stanway
		Headteacher	Mrs Gayle Ogilvie
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Laughton is smaller than the average primary school. It serves a village and nearby areas, close to Rotherham. These areas contain a mix of privately owned and local authority rented housing. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with most schools, as is the proportion entitled to a free school meal.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Laughton is a satisfactory and improving school that has some real strengths, particularly in pupils' personal development and the care given to all. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children in the Foundation Stage benefit from good provision and make good progress. Longstanding weaknesses in pupils' writing are now being successfully tackled. The school has a good reputation locally. Parents appreciate the courses the school provides for them and the clubs and interesting activities, such as working with artists and dancers, that their children enjoy so much. Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school. Behaviour is very good and pupils get on very well together. They feel safe and secure and have a good understanding how to look after themselves. They mostly appreciate the healthy options at lunchtime and enjoy exercise. Although pupils' basic skills could be better their good social skills, ability to evaluate what they do and willingness to take on responsibility enable them to face the future with confidence. Standards are broadly average and achievement satisfactory. Pupils usually attain better in mathematics and science than English, where weaknesses in writing have depressed results. Over time, pupils' achievement in mathematics has been satisfactory but in science and in English in particular pupils have underachieved. In 2006, Year 6 pupils achieved significantly worse in English than pupils in other schools. This year, imaginative approaches to writing, including using visual literacy strategies, whereby exciting stimulus such as film clips are used to capture pupils' interest, are leading to marked improvements in the way pupils express themselves in written form, although it is too soon to measure their full impact. However, weaknesses still remain in aspects such as punctuation, handwriting and spelling, leading to pupils' writing not being as precise and technically accomplished as it could be. Weaknesses in Key Stage 2 pupils' skills in scientific investigation are still holding them back in science. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress to reach expected levels from below expectations on entry. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Literacy lessons are often stimulating and well taught making pupils eager to share their ideas in discussions and on paper. However, some teachers accept too readily untidy work which contains careless mistakes. Teachers regularly make helpful comments on completed English work that pupils appreciate and which help them to improve. In Key Stage 2, teachers' marking of pupils' work in mathematics and science sometimes fails to identify errors and rarely provides useful feedback to them. This is limiting the progress they make. In Key Stage 1 pupils are consistently given helpful feedback in all subjects and their work benefits from this. The school's curriculum is good. It is broadly based and enables pupils to produce good work in subjects such as art and physical education. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory with strengths in pastoral care, for example through the work of the learning mentor. Academic guidance is satisfactory, being helpful in English but very limited in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, where progress is not tracked closely enough and pupils are not yet being given targets to help them to improve. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Effective steps are now being taken to tackle the longstanding underachievement in writing. There are appropriate plans for improvement, based on sound evaluations of its performance. Improvement

since the last inspection has been satisfactory, although weaknesses remain in the presentation of the pupils' work. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory, as is its value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accuracy and precision of pupils' punctuation, handwriting and spelling and the way they present their work, in order to raise standards and achievement in writing.
- Improve the quality of pupils' investigative skills at Key Stage 2, in order to raise standards and achievement in science.
- Improve the quality of support and guidance given to pupils in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, including the quality of teachers' marking, so that pupils understand what they have to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning to reach the nationally expected levels, but only just in writing and calculation, the weakest aspects on entry. Progress is steady and secure in Key Stage 1, with very good progress now being made in writing. More pupils are on track to achieve the higher Level 3 in writing than has been the case before. Standards are in line with the national average by the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics. Equally impressive progress is being made in writing in Key Stage 2, with pupils often making two to three times the normally expected gains each term and reducing earlier deficits in their learning. This reflects the efforts made and success achieved in implementing the school's new literacy strategies. However, weaknesses in punctuation and spelling remain and these restrict the level of pupils' technical skills in writing. Standards at Year 6 are currently broadly average in English, mathematics and science, although there are weaknesses in pupils' abilities to undertake scientific investigations. Pupils are on track to reach the realistic targets that have been set for them. As in most small schools test results have varied from year to year, reflecting the differences in cohorts.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to the school's systems for rewarding good behaviour and this is reflected in their positive attitudes, good consideration of others and very good behaviour. They appreciate and respect cultural diversity. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They discuss issues thoughtfully, for example in Philosophy for Children sessions, empathise with others and show good self-awareness and sensitivity when they evaluate their own and others' work. They are keen to contribute through their involvement in class and the school councils, leading Huff

and Puff physical activities at break times, supporting others on the Friendship Bench at break times and generally helping around school. Attendance is average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school judges this to be good. It is in the Foundation Stage and there are good aspects in all classes, such as: the consistent use of strategies which successfully help pupils to understand what they will be learning and what is expected of them in lessons; the imaginative use of stimulus materials; and careful explanations and effective questioning that ensure pupils understand and are challenged. Weaknesses that reduce overall effectiveness of teaching include not always ensuring that all pupils are actively involved when introducing new learning. In Key Stage 2, teachers accept careless and sometimes poorly presented work and, except in English, often miss opportunities when marking pupils' work to help them improve what they do.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, while valuing other subjects. Philosophy for Children is successfully extending thinking skills and contributing well to pupils' personal development. A good relationship with the local secondary school is enabling pupils to learn French and to extend their physical education skills. Visitors and visits, for example, to the Crucial Crew enrich the effective programme for personal development. A good range of out of class activities and interesting visits and theme weeks, such as Africa week, enrich pupils' learning opportunities. In the Foundation Stage good provision is made across all areas of learning, both in class and outdoors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school judges this to be good and indeed the care given to pupils is strong, being firmly based on very good, trusting relationships, effective involvement of parents and appropriate agencies. Robust policies are in place to ensure pupils' well-being and safety. Academic guidance and support, however, is satisfactory. It is good in English, where pupils' work is constructively marked, their progress tracked and they are provided with targets to work towards. However, pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with minimal guidance in mathematics and science. Regular tracking of progress and the setting of targets has yet to be established. Pupils say they would like more guidance in these subjects to help them to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

This aspect is not quite as strong as the school judges. There is a common sense of purpose and the school runs smoothly. Overall, self-evaluation is satisfactory but tends to be overgenerous in its evaluation of aspects of the school provision, such as teaching and the effectiveness of academic guidance and support. Data is used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and to modify what is taught to them. The monitoring of teaching provides helpful feedback on lessons but has not always been effective in identifying weaknesses such as ineffective marking. Governors are very supportive and take an active interest in the school but they are too dependent on reports they receive and are not sufficiently involved in finding out for themselves how well it is doing.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I really enjoyed my visit. I think that your school is satisfactory but that it is improving. For example, I know how much you enjoy the visual literacy lessons that started this year and appreciate the helpful comments that teachers now make about what you have written. I think that both of these are really helping you make your writing much better.

Your behaviour is very good and you get on very well together. Many of you said how much you like being in school because your teachers are friendly and kind and because you enjoy your lessons. I think that everyone in the school looks after you very well and they listen to what you have to say. I think that the ideas you have had to make the school better, such as the shelter and the quiet areas were very good. I was impressed with how many of you help around school, for example putting up nets in the morning, looking after the Huff and Puff equipment, helping children at the friendship stop and generally giving a helpful hand in classes.

All the grown-ups in school want you to have the best school possible and I know they are doing their best to make this happen. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and to give you exciting experiences, such as the Africa Week.

I think that the school can improve further by:

- helping you to do better in writing, especially in your spelling, punctuation and handwriting and in the way you present your work
- helping you to do better in science at Key Stage 2, particularly with investigations
- helping those of you in Key Stage 2 to understand what you can do to make your work better in mathematics and science, just as you do in English.

You can help in this by always trying to make your work neat and tidy. I would like to thank you for being so friendly and welcoming.