



Laindon Park Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114802
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290034
Inspection dates 8–9 January 2007
Reporting inspector John Godwood

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Hill
School category	Community		Laindon, Laindon
Age range of pupils	3–11		Basildon, Essex SS15 5SE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01268 544808
Number on roll (school)	132	Fax number	01268 492671
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs M Larkin
		Headteacher	Mrs C Garland
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school, with four mixed-age classes and a Nursery. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. More pupils than is usual join the school during their school career.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that enables pupils to achieve well and develop well as young people. Most parents are very pleased with the school, particularly with the level of care and the approachability of the staff. One parent wrote, 'I am really delighted with Laindon Park. My children are always happy and look forward to school.'

During the 2005/6 school year, the school faced considerable staffing difficulties in Key Stage 1. The headteacher rightly treated pupils' achievement and well-being as her main priority. With considerable input from senior staff and good support from the local authority, standards were maintained and even improved. The difficulties have now been resolved and staffing is again stable.

When children join the school, their language and number skills are, on average, below those expected nationally. The school has a good Nursery, in which children make good progress in their skills and social development. Pupils also make good progress through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and reach standards that are broadly average overall, and sometimes above. The school has a strong focus on literacy, but nevertheless, pupils make better progress in mathematics and science than they do in English, particularly in the number of pupils who reach the higher levels in tests.

Pupils achieve well because they are happy in school and are well taught. The school has a good ethos in which pupils learn to respect and care for others. As a result, their personal development is good. They behave well. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe in school and are taught well how to stay safe and to be healthy. They enjoy being helpful and taking on responsibilities, although the number of formal responsibilities available to them is currently limited.

The range of subjects and other activities is satisfactory. Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons carefully to match the range of age and ability in each class. Pupils enjoy most lessons because they find them interesting and are actively engaged. Teachers check pupils' progress carefully and provide additional help where it is needed. There is some variation, however, in how well pupils are involved in thinking for themselves through class discussion and through feedback on their next steps in learning.

The school is well led, and staff work well together in the best interests of the pupils. The headteacher, well supported by her deputy, provides a clear direction. Subject coordinators plan and monitor their subjects well. Pupils' test and assessment results are analysed very carefully to identify improvements needed in teaching. However, as a result of the attention required to overcome the staffing difficulties, there has not been sufficient rigour or regularity in lesson observations. Planning is satisfactory, but the outcomes of evaluations are not used sufficiently in planning new developments. The school gives good value for money and has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in literacy so that more pupils reach the higher levels.

- Improve the consistency of teachers' skills in engaging pupils in discussion and providing clear feedback on their next steps.
- Increase the rigour and regularity of lesson observations and ensure that the results of evaluations are used in planning new developments.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards vary somewhat as year groups are small. However, pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points and reach standards that are usually average and sometimes above.

Results in national assessments at the end of Year 2 have been average in most recent years. In 2006, pupils did particularly well and reached above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year 6 test results show that pupils have consistently made good progress over the past few years. There is an improving trend. Results are broadly average overall. In 2006, they were average in English, above average in mathematics and science. Pupils make less progress in English than in other subjects. The school met most of its targets, except for the proportion of pupils reaching the highest level in English, which was below average.

Boys and girls generally make equally good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and make good progress, as do the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school provides a calm, friendly environment in which pupils get on well together and enjoy learning. Pupils share the school's values of mutual respect and care for others, which are taught in assemblies and reinforced consistently. As a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The Nursery and Reception classes promote children's social and personal development well so that they have a good start and grow in confidence.

Pupils behave well. They develop a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy from lessons and other activities. They are pleased to take on responsibilities as dinner monitors or librarians. Such opportunities are currently quite limited, but the school is planning shortly to appoint playleaders and a school council. Attendance is broadly average. The school promotes it effectively and it has improved, but a minority of pupils attend poorly. Pupils' academic and social skills give them a sound start to their future working lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and, as a result, pupils are keen to take part. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects. They plan lessons well, making good use of assessments to match the work to pupils' different ages and abilities. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the support provided for pupils with learning difficulties.

Pupils enjoy most lessons because they are engaged in interesting activities, including some use of information and communication technology (ICT). There is some variation, however, in how well pupils are encouraged to think for themselves through questions and discussions.

Class targets for literacy and numeracy give pupils' learning additional focus and contribute to their good progress. However, teachers vary in the extent to which they give pupils individual targets and provide clear feedback on pupils' next steps.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The range of subjects and other activities is satisfactory. Literacy and numeracy are promoted well, and increasingly teachers link these to the learning of other subjects. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn ICT skills. Courses are well planned, including the personal development course, which enables pupils to consider and contribute their own opinions. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn Spanish. Physical education and sports activities are restricted by limitations in the building and site, though building works are planned to improve this. The school uses sports coaches and links with other schools to extend the range of activities. There is well planned support for pupils who have learning difficulties and satisfactory extension for gifted and talented pupils.

Pupils' learning is enriched by a good number of visitors to the school, such as theatre groups and the 'Crucial Crew', which ran activities on health and personal safety. There are some visits, but the number of clubs is very limited, partly because of the small size of the school and partly because they have not been well attended. The school is seeking to increase the number of additional activities available to pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. There are good arrangements for child protection and ensuring safety in school. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and provide them with good care. Pupils trust the adults to listen and to sort out their concerns. Several parents commented that their children had grown in happiness and

self-confidence. The school has good links with other agencies to provide extra help for pupils who need it.

Pupils receive good academic guidance. Their attainment is assessed regularly, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Each pupil's progress is tracked carefully. Teachers use the results to provide additional support for children who are in danger of falling behind. The tracking has been made more effective over the past year and is an important factor in pupils' good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher. Together they maintain a strong, effective focus on pupils' achievement and personal development. Teachers and other staff have a good sense of common purpose and work well as a team. New staff are well supported. Subject leaders contribute well in planning and monitoring their subjects, especially in literacy and numeracy

The quality of self-evaluation is satisfactory. Test results are analysed well to identify areas for improvement. However, the regularity of lesson observations has slipped during recent staffing difficulties. The school development plan includes the right priorities, but is not linked closely enough to the outcomes of the school's self-evaluation.

Governance is satisfactory. The school finds it difficult to recruit governors, but some are very loyal and provide strong support and good links with the community. The governing body has grown in skill, but is not yet playing a full role in strategic planning and monitoring.

Staff and resources are used well. The Victorian building constrains aspects of the school's work, but is very well maintained to provide a bright, welcoming learning environment.

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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?	2
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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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	3
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
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

10 January 2007

Dear Children

Laindon Park Primary School, Church Hill, Laindon, Basildon, Essex, SS15 5SE

I enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for your friendly welcome and for sharing your thoughts with me. Several of you told me that you like school because you are taught well and everyone gets on well together. I could see that the adults care for you well and help you to grow into responsible young people. I was pleased to see that you are helpful to new children and younger children. Some of you do a good job as dinner monitors and librarians. Most of you are rarely away from school, but a few pupils are away too often.

The teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting activities that match your abilities well. You behave well and work hard. To make the teaching even better, I have asked the teachers to make sure that you are all able to join in class discussions and to give you good feedback on your next steps in learning.

Most of you make good progress and do well in tests. I was pleased to see that the results have gone up recently. Despite your hard work, many of you do not make as much progress in literacy as you do in maths and science. I have asked the school to keep working to raise standards in literacy.

The staff work very hard to make sure you are happy and learning well. The school is led well. Teachers check your progress often, and give you extra help if you need it. They also check how good the teaching is, though I have asked them to do this more often, so that they can plan improvements.

Many of your parents wrote to say that they are pleased with the school. I agree that it is a good school. I am confident that it will continue to improve. You can help by doing your very best in literacy and making sure you are not absent unless you have to be.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Godwood

Lead inspector