

# Laughton Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114404
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326006
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gavin Jones

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	93
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jenifer Sanders
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanna Munn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Laughton Lewes BN8 6AH

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 April 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school, in a rural setting, is much smaller than average. Pupils are taught in mixed aged classes, with the exception of the Reception class. Virtually all pupils are from a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average. During the last academic year, the school went through some turbulence, with building work and staff changes having some effect on pupils. The school has several curriculum awards.

## 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 an effective school. It provides a good education for its pupils and has improved since the last inspection. It consults widely with its parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive. 'It's a real delight to be part of this village school' is a sentiment shared by many parents. Parents understand that their children make good progress from their entry to school to their exit at Year 6. Pupils leave with standards that are above national averages. Due to some turbulence in staff, coupled with some major building work, some standards slipped slightly during the previous year but are now back on track, following new appointments of staff. The improvement of teaching to a point where it is nearly always good is what drives good progress. There are features of outstanding teaching for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school is actively trying to ensure all teaching is good. To do this, the school is aware that some aspects of assessment, pupils' own self-assessment and the consistent use of targets are vital parts of any improvement. The school not only promotes learning well through its good curriculum, but provides equally good care and support, enabling pupils to develop well personally. 'My child is known and treated as an individual' was a typical parental comment. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and this is evident in above average levels of attendance. In lessons, their attitudes are good, they behave well and are keen to be involved. The successful personal, social and health education programme ensures that pupils are aware of healthy lifestyles. Pupils feel safe and secure in school, and were keen to tell inspectors that they feel they can discuss problems with adults in school. Whilst pupils have good basic literacy and numeracy skills and make good progress in gaining skills in information and communication technology (ICT), their understanding of life in the workplace and additional skills required for their future economic well-being are satisfactory rather than good because they lack opportunities to experience enterprise activities or hear about life in the world of business, for example. The decisive leadership of the headteacher ensures that there are well-chosen priorities for improvement, arising from good data analysis. These are shared with both class teachers and governors. They allow the former to plan for a range of improvements in their classes and help the latter to monitor the success of these changes against agreed criteria. Whilst pupils are very much part of the school and village community, the school has not made sufficient plans to help pupils understand what life is like in contrasting parts of the United Kingdom or lifestyles in areas of the world. The school has progressed well since the last inspection, particularly due to changes brought about by the headteacher related to assessment, marking and writing. With a new senior leadership team working closely with governors and bearing in mind recent improvements and the quality of self-evaluation, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The vast majority of children arrive at school having had some form of pre-school experience. They settle quickly, entering with skills that are broadly average for their age. Nearly all children make good progress, with a small number making very good progress. This is due to the excellent care for their welfare and in no small part to the quality of teaching which is invariably good and often outstanding. By the time children join Year 1, they have attained most of the learning goals expected of this age group, with a significant minority doing better than this.

Good use is made of space and there is a stimulating learning environment. The compact and well used outside area effectively extends the classroom. It is used for a wide range of activities, including planting vegetables. Children show an excellent level of confidence as they move about the teaching areas. They are very active in their learning and adults help them extend their speaking and listening skills at every opportunity. Children are emerging as readers and writers and are well prepared for the national curriculum. Work is colourfully presented and this in turn enhances learning. The balance between adult-directed work in class and work chosen by children is good. Assessment procedures are in place which successfully provide for individual learning needs and opportunities for gathering data about their progress. Although the leader has only been at the school a short time, leadership and management of Early Years Foundation Stage are excellent, ensuring that induction procedures are good and that very good quality care provides outstanding support for the children.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that there are more planned opportunities for pupils to learn about lifestyles in other parts of the United Kingdom and develop an understanding of their place in the global community.
- In order to improve teaching so that it is more consistently good, make more use of assessment information to set challenging targets for pupils and show them more clearly how they can improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Currently, the school's effective and efficient tracking system confirm inspectors' judgment that standards are on line to be above average by the end of Year 6, with pupils making good progress during their time at the school. Standards were not as high in 2008, as a result of turbulence in staffing in the upper part of the school, together with considerable building alterations taking place. Both of these issues have been resolved with positive effects on standards and pupils' progress. Better emphasis on extending pupils' writing through lessons other than literacy has successfully helped extend pupils' writing, bringing it up to the same good level as reading. Issues of girls not achieving as well as boys in mathematics have also been resolved through extra support and more focused teaching. Progress is now good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Although standards in science were below those of English and mathematics last year at the end of Year 6, better tracking of progress has helped check any underachievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and they receive good support from well-informed teaching assistants. As a result, they make the same good progress as other pupils, with many achieving nationally expected standards.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, and behave well in class and around the school. One parent summed up the common view: 'The school is going from strength to strength with its new facilities and positive attitudes.' Pupils are friendly and articulate and describe a range of activities that they like doing, from problem solving to PE lessons. A group of pupils spoke highly of their teachers, saying they felt very safe in school and felt there was always an adult who would listen to them. Attendance is above average, underlining pupils' interest in school. Pupils are aware of the need for healthy lifestyles and are very pleased that the school holds

the Healthy School award. The school council is well established and its members are proud of some of the improvements that they have helped bring about. Whilst they raise money for national and local charities, underlining their good social and moral development, pupils are less aware of what life is like in urban areas of the United Kingdom and of areas in the wider world community beyond Europe. As a result, they are not as well prepared as they might be for life in the multicultural society which they will grow up in. At the same time, pupils' preparation for their future in the economic sense lacks opportunities for them to take part in enterprise initiatives or gain an understanding of how businesses work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Changes in staffing, together with good monitoring of teaching linked to professional development, have ensured that teaching and learning have been improved since the last inspection. Very good relationships are at the centre of the quality of teaching. Teachers know the children well and behaviour is well managed so that all of the pupils' energy is directed into learning. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities for discussion and the use of interactive whiteboards and show good attitudes to their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning, as their needs are supported well by teaching assistants. Whilst daily planning relates well to the mixed age classes, the range of formats used for planning does not always allow specific detail to be noted about the variety of challenges needed for the higher attaining pupils in particular. Marking is often good and pupils are aware that it helps them make progress in their work. Pupils understand their targets, which are displayed in all classes. However, although some teachers make use of aspects of assessment which involve pupils in evaluating their own work, this is not consistent practice across the school and has a restricting impact on pupils' achievement. Together with creating further opportunities for pupils to be guided in their own self-evaluation, the school recognises that improving the use of assessment is a fundamental way to further improve the quality of teaching and learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school has mapped out its curriculum carefully to ensure that in its mixed-age classes, there is no repetition or gaps in coverage of the national curriculum. Work in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT gives pupils a good range of basic skills for their future life experiences. At the same time it tries, successfully, to link subjects together in topics in order not to compartmentalise learning. Such topics now give pupils better opportunities to put into practice their writing skills, with very positive effects on standards. Planning for cultural and multicultural awareness is not so well advanced and this limits some aspects of pupils' personal development. Education for health and safety is covered well and provision for enrichment is good. Visits and visitors enhance learning, while themed weeks add interest and excitement to the curriculum. For example, visits to a synagogue and a residential visit to the Isle of Wight are firmly in place on the curriculum, whilst the first exchange with French pupils is close to being put in place. After-school club activities are greatly appreciated by pupils and parents alike, and consequently are often well-attended.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school. The small year groups enable each child to be known individually by all adults. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are rigorous and regularly reviewed. The school works closely with a range of outside agencies, for example in support of pupils with learning difficulties. The school, over time, has improved its assessment and tracking procedures, with science being the latest to be upgraded. The systematic use of these procedures ensures that any underachievement in pupils is noted at a very early stage, so that effective strategies can be put in place to support better progress being made. This was the case, for example, in successfully targeting girls who were not achieving well in mathematics, and the recognising need to improve writing across a range of subjects. Targets are effectively shared with pupils and are shown on the walls of all classes to show pupils what to aspire to.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, reflected in pupils' equality of opportunity, good academic and social achievement. The headteacher's excellent leadership ensures that, through good analysis and self-evaluation, senior staff have an acute understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Her vision for improvement is clearly articulated to staff and governors alike. There is good teamwork, and the decisive leadership of the headteacher has helped the school make improvements, for example to teaching and learning, assessment and tracking. New staff are making positive contributions to the school's development. Some of the school's subject leaders have done much to ensure improvements in their subjects, although the school recognises that there is still more to do, for example to make more use of assessment. The school judges what it does honestly and accurately, leading to clear and concise development planning of which all staff have ownership. Governors are now much more aware of the data available for the school. Governance is good, with governors confident to check the progress of initiatives and comment on their impact. The school's role as part of the local community is a very positive one. The community sports hall within the school building brings the school directly in contact with a range of clubs and groups. However, the school does not have a strategic plan for the widening of pupils' horizons to encompass national and international communities. These lag behind their strong sense of local community cohesion.



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## Annex A

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	2
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

**Annex B**

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

30 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Laughton Community Primary school, Lewes BN8 6AH

Thank you for making my colleague and me so welcome when we visited your school. We were pleased to see how happy you are and how much you enjoy being at school. Lots of children we met were able to tell us what you liked best about the school and the things that the school council had achieved. You explained things very well.

Laughton is a good school, where standards are above average and where you make good progress in your learning. This is because teaching is generally good, and because your attitudes to your work and your behaviour in class are good. Your good attendance shows that you are happy to be in school. Your classes look exciting places to be in, and displays around the school are very colourful.

You are looked after well by teachers and teaching assistants and this makes you feel safe in school. Your parents agree that this is the case and that are keen to say that you enjoy coming to school.

The school is well run, with the headteacher leading a very good team of staff and governors. This team knows the school well and is good at deciding what it needs to do to be even better.

Although you take part in many activities in and around the village, we have asked your teachers to help you get a clearer picture of what life is like in other parts of the country and in other countries where life for children may not be easy. We have also asked the school to help you take more part in understanding your targets, commenting on your own progress, so that you too can learn more effectively and make even faster progress.

You can continue to help by working hard and maintaining your good attendance.

Thank you again for making our day so interesting.

With best wishes,

Yours faithfully

Gavin Jones

Lead inspector