

Laindon Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114802
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	338448
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen Walker

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maureen Larkin
Headteacher	Cristina Portoles
Date of previous school inspection	8 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons and observed six teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school improvement plan, the tracking system to monitor the pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation, the work pupils were doing in their books and the questionnaires completed by staff, a sample of pupils and 40 parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the rate of progress of all groups of pupils in the school
- the effectiveness of teaching in engaging the pupils so that they make good progress
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in promoting the development of the younger children
- the effectiveness of the leadership and management in driving improvements in the school.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. It is situated in the western part of Basildon new town. The school is housed in the original Victorian school building which has been refurbished and extended. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds although there is a very small number from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average. Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes in each year except in Year 6. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is organised through the Nursery and Reception classes. The Reception class is taught with a group of Year 1 pupils. The breakfast club is organised by the school and was part of this inspection. The new headteacher has been acting as headteacher since January 2009 and has recently been appointed to a permanent position. The school has received National Healthy School Status, Active Mark and the International School awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The new headteacher provides focused leadership so that all the staff are supporting the good quality of education for the pupils. She has provided clear and strong leadership on an interim basis for the last year after a period of some instability for the school. The caring and pupil-centred atmosphere of this small school provides a high-quality environment for learning. One parent wrote: 'I am really pleased with the school. Our children are making good progress and enjoy coming to the school.'

Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their below-average starting

- points and the vast majority attain standards that are broadly average by the time
- they leave the school. Good teaching, the additional support for underachieving pupils and the emphasis on key skills are all contributing to the good progress of the pupils. The school is successful in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is ambitious to raise standards so that they are above the national average, particularly in English and mathematics. A significant number of pupils lack confidence in writing and applying skills in mathematical calculation. Tracking of pupils' progress and the additional help for underachieving pupils is supporting improvements in achievement. However, there are still a very small number of pupils who are not fully benefiting from this extra support.

The high quality of care, guidance and support greatly promotes pupils' good personal development. They enjoy their time at school and develop into friendly, responsible and confident individuals. The behaviour of pupils is good and this contributes to a positive atmosphere for learning in the school. They are respectful towards each other so that every pupil feels valued in the family atmosphere of this small school. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds integrate quickly into the school. Pupils feel very safe in the school and have a good understanding of issues relating to safety. The school has been proactive in monitoring absences and encouraging better attendance. Although attendance is broadly average, the poor attendance of a small number of pupils is adversely affecting their progress and experience of school. The school acknowledges the need to work more closely with the parents and carers to improve the attendance of these pupils.

Teaching is good as pupils are actively involved in lessons and make good progress. In a very small number of lessons, teaching is not sufficiently challenging or setting high enough expectations for all pupils. The curriculum is good and the school uses partnerships and visitors to enhance the educational experience for the pupils. The school runs smoothly because the headteacher is effective in supporting teachers and their assistants to work as a strong team. New systems for tracking pupils' progress are driving improvements in the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and the headteacher,

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staff and governing body are well aware of the strengths and areas for development. Strategic planning is good and there are clear actions for improvement. Subject leaders are developing their roles so that they are increasingly effective in fulfilling their planning, support and monitoring responsibilities.

The school has good partnerships with community groups, external services and local schools. There are very positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents are given regular information about school events and the progress of their children. The effective leadership of the school, the good record of pupils' progress and the commitment to continuous improvement by all staff indicate that this school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attainment of pupils across the school so that standards are above the national average in all subjects by:
 - developing strategies to further develop pupils' abilities and confidence in writing and applying skills in mathematical calculation
 - using effective support procedures to help all underachieving pupils who require additional help with their learning
 - ensuring that all teaching is challenging and is setting high expectations for all pupils.
- Improving the attendance rates to above average by:
 - working positively with parents and carers to encourage the importance of good attendance
 - using external agencies to support parents and carers in improving the attendance of some pupils
 - developing a system of commendations to celebrate the good attendance of individual and groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' current work shows that the majority are making good progress and achieving well. Pupils are attentive and display an enthusiasm to do well. Most enjoy learning and make good progress in their lessons. For example, Year 4 and 5 pupils were fully engaged in their work and made good progress when they were testing the insulation of different materials in a science lesson. By the time pupils leave the school, attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has been particularly successful in increasing the number of pupils who make at least two levels of progress in each year. The school, rightly, identifies the need for more pupils to gain the higher levels in writing and mathematics. The rigorous tracking system identifies underachieving pupils, who then receive appropriate support through a range of intervention strategies. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and

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those entitled to free school meals make good progress in line with others. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also makes good progress.

Pupils are proud to be part of the school and develop positive personal characteristics. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles, and demonstrate this through eating healthily, and readily taking part in outdoor and sporting activities. Pupils raise money for a range of charities and make a good contribution to the local community by inviting the elderly to school events and donating regularly to Little Havens Hospice. The school council is active in supporting improvements in the school, such as providing playground equipment. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to take responsibility such as looking after the younger pupils. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good, although the school acknowledges that more could be done to raise their awareness of the multicultural diversity of our society. Pupils' basic skills and ability to work with others are developing well. As a result, they are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The warm relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that there is a positive learning environment in the classroom. Classrooms are attractive learning areas with good examples of pupils' work on display. Teachers are meticulously planning lessons which are appropriate to the range of individual abilities in the classes. In the best lessons, teachers plan a range of interesting activities which motivate and engage the pupils in their learning. Teachers are effectively using interactive whiteboards to support the learning in their classes. A number of teachers are particularly good at accelerating learning through skilful questioning and continually checking the pupils' understanding. Most teachers are sharing their assessment of work so that pupils know what they have to do to improve. However, in a small number of lessons, pupils lose concentration when teachers' expectations of work are too low or the tasks are insufficiently challenging.

The school places a high emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy, which supports pupils' good progress. The school is developing a more skills-based approach which effectively shows pupils the links between the different subjects and brings learning to life. The curriculum makes good use of the local environment, including the history of Laindon village and the development of the Basildon Heritage Trail. All pupils develop their information and communication technology skills well. The physical education is supported well by the School Sports Partnership and all children have the opportunity to learn to swim at the local secondary school. Pupils have the opportunity to learn Spanish in each year group. A detailed programme of personal, health and social education at circle time greatly supports pupils' good personal development. A number of visits, including those to Hadley Country Park, Colchester Zoo and Duxford Museum, provide good enrichment for the curriculum. There is a good range of well-supported clubs and extra-curricular activities which greatly enhance pupils' enjoyment and experience of school.

The pastoral care for the pupils is good because there are effective systems of individual support for all pupils, including those who are vulnerable or have difficulties with learning. Pupils are well known as individuals and emphasise that there are always members of staff to talk to if they have a problem. There are clear procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and following up absences, although a small number of pupils have unsatisfactory attendance. The school is successful in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good working relationships between the school and external agencies benefit pupils, ensuring their social and learning needs are met through effective support programmes. The breakfast club provides a good standard of before-school care provision for the pupils. Good arrangements are in place to support a smooth transition to the local secondary schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<p>The quality of teaching</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p>2</p>

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong and collegial leadership which is driving improvements in the school. The key strategic priorities have been shared with staff so that there is a clear agenda for raising standards in all areas of the school's work. Senior managers are modelling good practice in the classroom and this is providing a strong impetus for improvement across the school. Rigorous systems of monitoring teaching and tracking pupils' progress are beginning to raise the standards achieved so that there are fewer pupils who underachieve in their work.

The school development plan is a comprehensive working document with precise actions and success criteria which are particularly focused on improving pupils' attainment and progress. Members of the governing body are well informed of the school's progress and areas for development. They are very supportive of the school and are effective in their evaluating and monitoring roles. Robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. The school has recently reviewed its policy for out-of-school visits to ensure that all procedures fully meet health and safety requirements. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities for all ensures that the school is fully inclusive in integrating pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds.

The school has good partnerships with the local consortium of primary and secondary schools, the Laindon School Sports Partnership and the local St.Nicholas Church. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion although it has not fully evaluated the impact of this work in the local community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to their education because of the well-planned provision and the consistently good teaching. There is an atmosphere of excitement and fun in the classes where children learn quickly and happily. Staff are skilled in providing a supportive and caring environment in which children feel comfortable and safe. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities so that children thrive in this busy yet structured atmosphere. They make good progress, particularly in their personal development as well as in their speaking and listening skills. They are beginning to link sounds and letters which provide a good basis to develop their skills in reading and writing. The children develop their social skills, behave well and help each other. They show tremendous curiosity and enthusiasm as they enjoy the different activities. They are developing independence and learning to share and cooperate with each other.

Teachers keep detailed records of children's skills and use this information to match the activities well to the full range of learning needs. The school is developing a more coordinated assessment system which will ensure the Noah Ark Nursery class is tracking progress in the same way as the Reception class. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is created by good organisation and leadership. The staff's good knowledge of early years learning and development enables them to meet the needs of each child in the classes. The spacious accommodation and outdoor area in the Reception class are used very effectively to support the learning of the children. The Nursery class is well resourced, but it is geographically distant from the Reception class and the outdoor area is not yet fully developed. There are good procedures in place to ensure a seamless transition from to the main school. There is regular liaison with parents and carers, who speak very highly of the care and support the school provides for their children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

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The majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire were positive about the work of the school and its impact on their children's learning. Parents emphasised the advantages of the small school and the caring approach of staff towards their children. A number made detailed comments on the good progress of their children and the dedication of the teachers. A small minority of respondents suggested the school does not communicate well with parents and carers. The inspectors found very little evidence to support this view and feel that the school provides good information about school events and pupils' progress. The inspection revealed little to endorse the few other criticisms made in the questionnaire returns. Overall, the supportive views of the majority of parents and carers reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Laindon Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 143 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	60	14	35	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	53	16	40	2	5	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	40	18	45	6	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	60	13	32	3	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	60	12	30	3	8	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	40	20	50	4	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	40	23	58	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	47	17	43	3	8	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	47	17	43	3	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	40	20	50	1	2	3	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	30	21	52	4	10	3	8
The school is led and managed effectively	18	45	16	40	2	5	4	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	65	9	23	4	10	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



7 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Laindon Park Primary School, Basildon, SS15 5SE

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school and for talking with us during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to hear you speaking Spanish in assembly and see you getting on well together during playtime. Your school is a good one and your parents are very pleased with the good start you make in your education. There are many positive things about your school.

You enjoy school and make good progress in your lessons.

You are friendly, responsible and well behaved.

You show kindness and consideration to others.

You have a good understanding of issues related to safety and healthy lifestyles.

The teachers and the support staff care greatly for you as individuals.

Your teachers work very hard to make your lessons interesting and exciting.

You are making good use of your extensive school grounds and play areas.

You have a good headteacher.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and the governing body to do the following things to make the school even better:

- help you to raise your standards of work by developing your confidence in writing and applying your skills in mathematical calculation
- improve the attendance rates in the school so that they are above the national average.

We would like to wish you success in your future education. Keep working hard so

- that you make the very best progress in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector

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