

# Laburnum Grove Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125873
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	340859
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Saunders

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	141
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Carol Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Philippa Otton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Laburnum Grove Bognor Regis PO22 9HT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, held meetings with representative governors and staff and spoke to pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence, including assessment records, planning of lessons, the school improvement plan, monitoring of teaching and learning, work produced by pupils, and 69 questionnaires returned by parents or carers, as well as pupil and staff questionnaires.

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

- records about attendance and the school's strategies to reduce persistent absence
- the impact of recent strategies to improve writing across the school
- the attainment, and consequently the progress, of pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties, and those with English as an additional language
- how well more able pupils are challenged in lessons
- the accuracy of teachers' assessments of the work pupils do.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school in an urban area of Bognor Regis. It has had a falling roll for a number of years, although the recent intake has increased. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make up about 9% of the school, with the largest group of these being of Polish heritage. A minority of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. The proportion of pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties is higher than average, particularly in some cohorts. The school has a few pupils with moderate physical and medical needs, as well as some who have behavioural, emotional and social needs. There has been ongoing work to improve the buildings, which is nearing completion. Among the awards the school has achieved are the Dyslexia Friendly Schools award, the Healthy Schools award and the Travel Mark award.

An independent Children's Centre has recently been built on the school grounds; the headteacher sits on the governing body.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving under the strong leadership of the headteacher. Working closely with other leaders, she has ensured that important issues have been tackled with determination, and progress made in overcoming considerable barriers to learning and in the personal development of pupils. Staff are dedicated and enthusiastic and put considerable effort into caring for pupils. As a result, pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is excellent; they are considerate and kind to each other and wholeheartedly participate in making the school a pleasant place to be.

Teaching has focused on providing good support for those with moderate or severe learning needs; these pupils make good progress, and some make even better progress. However, the level of work given to more able pupils is not always as challenging as they need. As a result, this group do not all attain as well as they might and make less progress than might be expected, particularly in their writing and mathematics. Pupils who are particularly able in specific areas are given additional opportunities to extend their learning, such as opportunities for girls to explore their use of mathematics.

Learning is often presented through topics which are interesting and relevant to the pupils. Literacy and numeracy skills are embedded throughout the curriculum, through a range of strategies to help all pupils make the most of these opportunities, for example through the use of physical prompts. This helped the school achieve the Dyslexia Friendly school award, and this integration of skills is being developed even further. Pupils work diligently in lessons, although they rely heavily on the direction of the teachers at times and this hampers their progress. In the best lessons, good pace, accurate assessment of the learning of all pupils, and well-focused tasks mean that learning is fun and effective. This is not yet consistent across the school. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school and are effective in tackling areas of weakness, as shown by the improvements that have already been brought about, for example in behaviour and attendance. Their capacity to improve further is good.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help pupils to be more independent in their learning and know what they need to do next by:
  - embedding the new strategies to support writing at a higher level

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- encouraging pupils to respond to advice.
- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 in English and mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that more able pupils are consistently provided with work that challenges them
  - sharing best practice in supporting these pupils across the school.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

In lessons, the good subject knowledge of the teachers, opportunities to contribute what pupils already know, and the use of interesting topics to develop skills mean that pupils enjoy their learning. Classrooms and resources are well organised, which contributes towards pupils' sense of confidence. Inspectors particularly looked at the progress made by those with moderate or severe learning needs, and those learning English as an additional language. The wide-ranging needs of these pupils are vigilantly monitored and they receive carefully targeted support. As a result, they are well integrated into lessons and make good progress both in their learning and their personal development. For example, teachers took time to relate to pupils' home languages when helping them to explore a new topic in science. Parents commented how much they appreciate the opportunities and support the school had given their children, to make sure they were ready for the next stage of their learning.

Preliminary results suggest that pupils who sat national tests in 2009 reached higher standards than in the previous year, particularly so in science, so that attainment overall was broadly average. The school's own data show that not as many pupils are reaching the higher levels as might be expected, particularly in writing and mathematics. The school recognises this and has begun tackling this issue by introducing a well-structured approach to writing, and new materials to support learning in mathematics.

Pupils have good attitudes towards their learning and are eager to do the tasks they are given. Attendance has improved and is now good; those who are away from school with medical issues are considerably supported by the school. Pupils listen and contribute well. However, they rely too much on the teachers for direction and to keep them focused, particularly when working in small groups or on their own. This means that while they enjoy what they are doing, they do not make as much progress as they might. The development of literacy and numeracy skills in many different lessons, the excellent information and communication technology skills gained, and the good personal and social skills developed mean that pupils are well prepared for the world beyond the school. They are supportive of each other and are understanding of those who have particular emotional, social or physical needs.

Pupils spoke firmly about the fact that they do not say unkind things to each other. They feel that any disagreements or incidents are dealt with quickly and fairly. The peer mediators help effectively with this, and the playground buddies are also well regarded. The pupils appreciate the improvements in the environment of the school and thoroughly enjoy the large, interesting playground. They are well aware of the things they can do to keep themselves safe and healthy and particularly enjoy participating in

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the many clubs, activities and sports on offer outside the curriculum. A number of pupils said that physical education lessons were the best thing at school, because of the enthusiasm and expertise of the teachers; this helped the school achieve recognition with the Healthy School award. In lessons, while they enjoy their work, pupils sometimes find it difficult to sustain their own motivation without input from the staff.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

In the lessons observed, relationships were good and teachers know the pupils well. They manage the pupils effectively. In line with the school's view, teaching was good in many respects, but too often there were missed opportunities for more able pupils to stretch their thinking, and they did not make as much progress as they might. As a result, inspectors judged that teaching was satisfactory overall. Academic guidance is good, with the use of targets in the core subjects, and positive, thorough marking, but comments do not always help pupils to know what they need to do towards their next steps of learning.

The well-developed curriculum ensures that skills and knowledge are developed through

<sup>1</sup> 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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a range of interesting, relevant topics and in a range of different settings. This is underpinned by consistently good use of technology in a wide variety of ways, such as the use of electronic voting systems for immediate assessment of what pupils know. Inspectors found that lessons were well prepared, because staff work as a team to organise the curriculum. However, pupils are not sure what they can do for themselves, and have insufficient guidance as to how they can reach the next level of their work. The introduction of a well-structured approach to improving writing is very recent, and too early to have had a significant impact, but staff are well informed and it is already getting pupils more excited about writing. For example, pupils were motivated when competing to use more ambitious words in other subject lessons. The wider views of pupils are developed by the interesting visits and visitors arranged to support the topics they cover. These also help pupils to understand how to relate to those in different circumstances, within Britain and in the wider world. In science, the school has developed good use of investigations and pupils have achieved particularly well as a result.

The wide range of emotional and physical needs that pupils have are met sensitively by the staff. As a parent said, 'Their whole ethos is caring and rewarding which has already shown through by my child's enthusiasm and confidence'. The school works hard to bring together all partners to give pupils the best opportunities they can. While many parents are an effective part of this, the school continues to look for ways of engaging all parents.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

With a clear focus on providing a high quality environment in which pupils can enjoy learning, the headteacher has worked hard to bring about impressive improvements in the buildings and the grounds. At the same time, there has been an emphasis on providing a high quality of care, guidance and support to ensure pupils' needs are met. The strong desire to improve the outcomes for pupils is evident at the heart of the school improvement plans, and all the staff share in this. The improvement in the attainment of girls in mathematics is an example. Specific strategies to improve progress have been developed through discussion with staff, and appropriate training provided, so that the ambitious vision is shared and embedded. For example, the use of new materials in mathematics is proving effective. While the governors have supported the

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school effectively in bringing about progress, there have been recent changes to the governing body and they are developing their level of challenge alongside their loyal support of the headteacher and staff. With the headteacher, they ensure that all safeguarding procedures are in place and the environment is kept safe.

The school is recognised as being an effective and highly appreciated partner in bringing about much change for the better in the local community, for example in improved behaviour and increased contribution to local projects. Leaders ensure that pupils have equal opportunities and are helped to access the curriculum where necessary. Relevant family learning programmes help to ensure pupils have the support they need at home and are carefully focused on the needs within the area. For example, courses about cooking on a budget helped the school gain the Healthy Schools award, and parents were encouraged to work with the school on the travel plan, helping the school to achieve recognition for this. The school have developed beneficial partnerships with other schools, for example in training teaching assistants in supporting pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. The tolerant and supportive attitudes of pupils are evidence of the good strategies the school has in place to promote equality and tackle discrimination.

The school is particularly effective in promoting community cohesion. Participation in a number of national and global initiatives helps pupils to develop relationships with others from different cultures and grow in their understanding of communities beyond their own. This includes writing letters to Australian pupils and hosting American students, as well as participating in a multicultural dance festival in London. Along with other activities that support the local community, such as the gardening club run by the school and local residents, the pupils act as community wardens. The school recognises that they could develop more effective links with partners from different faiths.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>
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## Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents are positive about the school. Parents interviewed informally strongly supported this positive view, and expressed their appreciation of how their children's personal development had improved. In the questionnaire, just over 10% of parents who responded had some concerns about the progress of their children, while a similar proportion did not feel that they were well informed about progress. Inspectors agreed that the progress of some pupils needs to be improved, but did find that there were appropriate ways for parents to be kept informed. Just under 19% of responses indicated that parents felt that the school did not take account of their suggestions. About 40% of the responses included written comments, roughly equal numbers of which were positive and negative. A few expressed dissatisfaction with the leadership of the school and mentioned poor communication, while a very few were unhappy at the lack of support for pupils with difficulties. Inspectors found that pupils with particular difficulties are sensitively supported, with the school working hard to gain access to appropriate support from a wide range of other partners. Of the positive comments, a few mentioned how well their child had settled in and a couple each mentioned the quality of teaching, support for homework, the school's engagement with parents and the after-school activities.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Laburnum Grove Junior 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 141 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	35	40	58	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	28	41	38	55	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	23	36	52	7	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	23	36	52	6	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	19	28	40	58	4	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	19	42	61	8	12	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	22	50	73	3	4	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)	18	26	43	62	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	22	42	61	6	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	28	35	51	8	12	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	25	30	44	11	16	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	19	28	38	55	5	7	5	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	38	35	51	3	4	3	4

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



17 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Laburnum Grove Primary School, Bognor Regis PO22 9HT

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You certainly have a large and interesting playground and enjoy your breaktimes. You told us that your teachers take good care of you, and we could see that you enjoy being at school, particularly doing physical education and the activities and clubs after school.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. That means that it does some things well, but there are a few things that it could do better.

Here is what we thought about your school:

- Your behaviour is excellent, and you like to learn because the teachers make lessons fun.
- You did a little better in English and mathematics last year, and much better in science.
- Staying healthy is important to you, and you know how to do this.
- The teachers make sure you cover the work you need to, often through fun topics that you like.
- You and your teachers are particularly good at using computers, which will be a great help as you get older.
- The teachers take good care of you, particularly if you need any extra help.
- The school have made sure the buildings are improved, so that you have pleasant classrooms to learn in.
- The headteacher knows what needs to be done to make things even better, and she is determined to do so.

There are some things we have asked your school to improve:

- Those of you who find learning fairly easy should be given harder work to do, so that you can do even better in your assessments.
- You need to know exactly what you need to do to reach the next level of your work; you can help by not waiting for your teachers to tell you what to do next.

Most of all, you should continue to enjoy your learning and be proud of being part of your school.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Saunders

Lead inspector

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