

Laughton Community Primary School

Church Lane, Laughton, Lewes, BN8 6AH

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children experience vibrant and imaginative teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- A greater proportion of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 achieve expected results in reading, writing and mathematics than in most schools. More pupils achieve results at the higher levels in Key Stage 1 than in most schools.
- Most teaching is at least good and some is outstanding across the school. Pupils learn well during most lessons because they are active in their own learning and because the topics they study excite them.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning and increasingly high expectations of themselves. Their behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school.
- Leadership is good because the decisive action of the headteacher, other leaders and governors has rapidly enhanced the quality of teaching and improved pupils' results.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils' results at the higher levels in Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics, though improving, are too low.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is not yet fast enough, especially in reading and writing. Rates of progress do not yet reflect the improvements in teaching recently introduced to the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector saw teaching in every class. He observed one assembly, seven lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground. All lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, two members of the governing body, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspector observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. He heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's use of sports premium and pupil premium funding, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is checked and tracked and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through taking note of the 40 responses to the online Parent View survey, discussions with five parents and carers and one letter that was received.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 13 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is much lower than the national average. This extra money is provided for children in local authority care, children with a parent or carer in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils with a parent or carer in the armed forces or in local authority care, and very few pupils eligible for free school meals currently on roll.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action or at school action plus is below average, and there are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, while others have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties or other needs. There is a very low number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently on roll.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than in most other schools. This is mainly due to pupils arriving at the school other than at usual times.
- The school currently consists of four classes. All classes are organised to contain two year groups.
- The school does not operate any alternative provision for pupils.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2011. The Year 3/4 teacher took up her post in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that a greater proportion of the most able pupils achieve results at the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Increase the rate of progress pupils make in Key Stage 2, especially in reading and writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children well for the rest of their time in school. Most children start school with skills that are expected for their age and make steady or faster progress in all areas of their learning as they move through the Reception Year. Achievement is not yet outstanding because too few of the most able pupils achieve results at the higher levels in writing and mathematics.
- Results of national screening in phonics (the sounds letters make) have been lower over time than in most other schools. However, recent improvements to the quality of teaching mean that Key Stage 1 pupils' progress in phonics is now much faster than in previous years.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have substantially improved, especially in writing. Pupils' results are now higher than those in most other schools. This is because of better and more organised teaching.
- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 have also improved. A greater proportion of pupils achieve average results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 than in most other schools.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 3 but their progress in Years 4 to 6 is too slow, particularly in reading and writing. This is because of previous weaknesses in teaching that have now been eradicated from the school, and is another reason why the achievement of pupils is not outstanding.
- Pupils receiving support through the use of pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make progress in line with their peers. This is because of effective one-to-one tuition and extra support they receive during lessons.
- Pupils are heard to read regularly and make good use of the attractive and well-stocked library. They demonstrate a love of reading and talk about the books they read with enthusiasm. For example, one Year 6 pupil talked enthusiastically about how the book *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* differed from the film version.
- Pupils made good progress during the great majority of lessons seen during the inspection. This was because pupils were active in their own learning and found the topics they were studying engaging.
- Pupils present their work to a good standard and take increasing pride in their achievements and the quality of their learning. This is because of teachers' high expectations and the rewarding of good work through, for example, the award of special pens for very good handwriting.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and most teaching across the school is now good with some that is outstanding. All habitually weak or inadequate teaching has been eradicated from the school.
- Most lessons feature good opportunities for practical learning and investigative work, and pupils' knowledge and understanding are deepened as a result. For example, one good Year 1/2 mathematics lesson featured a substantial range of practical resources that pupils used effectively to make their own discoveries about number bonds and addition.
- The best teaching is pacy, stimulating, enthusiastic and imaginative. Teachers engage pupils in high-quality dialogue and give them good opportunities to offer suggestions and explain their ideas. For example, in a good Year 5/6 English lesson about good note-taking pupils discussed how they could determine whether certain information was relevant or not.
- The small amount of weaker teaching suffers from a lack of pace and overlong introductions that prevent pupils from getting on with their learning quickly enough. As a result pupils do not progress quickly enough, and some pupils lose focus and go off task. This is why the quality of

teaching is not outstanding.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is vibrant, very imaginative and highly engaging. For example, an outstanding literacy lesson featured a very effective search for a dragon and different types of fantasy world to promote imaginative early writing and storytelling. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are attractive and well laid out and resources, including the role-play area, are very well presented and used.
- Teachers offer pupils clear advice about how to improve their work during most lessons. Written feedback given to pupils also offers such advice, though the thoroughness of this varies. Pupils are clear about their targets and what they need to do to achieve them.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support individual pupils with particular needs and groups of pupils. All groups of pupils make progress in line with each other as a result.
- Homework is used effectively to practise skills and apply knowledge. Pupils find homework useful and interesting, particularly when it relates to their topic work.
- Pupils interviewed by the inspector praised the quality of teaching and the support and guidance offered by their teachers.
- A large majority of parents and carers who left an opinion for the inspector thought that their children were taught well and made good progress as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and keen, especially when teaching is at its strongest. Pupils can sometimes go off task and lose engagement with learning when teaching is less strong. This is why the behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- Low-level disruption is uncommon and managed well during the few times it does arise. It is not allowed to distract other pupils from their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground and when travelling around the school is good. The vast majority of pupils are courteous and friendly at all times. Relationships between pupils are good and they show proper respect to adults. Pupils are good at working together and listening to each other well.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They understand why bullying and extreme behaviour such as racism are not acceptable. The theme of 'Conflict' is used well to promote pupils' understanding of how to avoid bullying and resolve disagreements. Pupils who talked to the inspector did not feel that there is any bullying in the school and felt safe and well looked after.
- The school's management of pupils' behaviour is effective and increasingly consistent. Pupils know what is expected of them. There are a few incidents of poor or aggressive behaviour, mainly related to a very small number of pupils with particular needs. School records show that these incidents are responded to effectively and that the school is working to improve the behaviour of pupils involved.
- Attendance has improved over time and is now higher than in most other schools. This is because of the school's high expectations of attendance and because of successful initiatives such as the use of an 'attendance bear' to reward good attendance.
- Most parents, carers and staff who expressed an opinion thought that behaviour in the school was well managed, though a small number of parents and carers offered a different point of view.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders and governors have high aspirations for the school. They are committed to raising pupils' achievement and improving the school. However, pupils' progress in Key Stage 2, particularly in reading and writing, has been too slow, which is why

leadership and management are not outstanding.

- The quality of teaching is scrutinised accurately and rigorously. Strong actions by the headteacher have led to the establishment of capable staffing and the eradication of all inadequate teaching from the school. As a result pupils' progress has accelerated.
 - Leaders at all levels have improved communication across the school and ensured that staff operate more effectively as a cohesive team than previously. This has resulted in improved teaching and higher expectations across the school.
 - The school's evaluation of its strengths and priorities for development are accurate. Leaders, including middle leaders, understand information on pupils' progress well and use it to inform school and subject targets. Actions designed to improve the school are clearly identified in the school's development plan and several are already showing a positive impact. For example, the restructuring of phonics teaching has led to substantially improved results.
 - Performance management is rigorous. Teachers are set targets relating to improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' results and progress. Decisions about possible pay awards to staff are explicitly linked to consideration of teachers' performance and their success in meeting their targets. Teachers' training needs are identified and they are given support to help them meet their targets.
 - The subjects pupils learn are stimulating and pupils are engaged through absorbing and imaginative topics, such as 'Fantasia'. There are good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a global dimension to the curriculum, seen through the school's links with Ethiopia and topics such as 'Tales from Europe'. Pupils also engage in activities such as an 'enterprise week', a 'Make a Difference Day' and participation in community concerts. Equality of opportunity is promoted well.
 - Pupils' engagement in sports and physical education is broad and includes swimming for some pupils, cycle training and involvement in a local cricket tournament. Sports premium funding is used to enhance pupils' experience through the input of an outside specialist and to develop teachers' skills and effectiveness in this area.
 - Pupil premium funding is spent on effective one-to-one tuition, the provision of a teaching assistant, extra classes in English and mathematics and pastoral support. These have led to improvements in the engagement and behaviour of particular pupils and contributed to the progress made by eligible pupils.
 - The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements.
 - The local authority has supported the school. It has contributed training and opportunities for teachers to develop professionally, and checked the quality of pupils' work.
 - The headteacher and school leadership team have the well-judged confidence of the school's governing body, the local authority, a very large majority of parents and carers and all of the staff.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors monitor the school well, and are very active and visible in the school. They have been trained effectively and understand data about pupils' progress and how they compare with data of other schools nationally, and as a result are able to challenge the school appropriately about pupils' achievement. However, sometimes minutes of governing body meetings do not always record the detail of challenges raised. Governors scrutinise the quality of teaching, which they regularly observe for themselves. Governors set the headteacher performance management targets that reflect the key priorities of the school and oversee the process for all staff in the school. They scrutinize school finances carefully, including the use and results of the sports and pupil premium funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is good.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114404
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	429537

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise Kong
Headteacher	Rachel West
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2009
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