

# Leigh Beck Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115054
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	311804
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Milton

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 on roll</b>	
School	381
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lynne Keys
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Dave Bridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Point Road Canvey Island Essex SS8 7TD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 683037
<b>Fax number</b>	01268 690017

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Leigh Beck Junior School is well above average in size. It has three classes in each of Years 3, 4 and 5 and four classes in Year 6. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning and communication difficulties, behavioural and emotional needs, and physical disabilities fluctuates from year to year but is currently below average. The school has the Investors in People Award, the Healthy Schools National Award, the Basic Skills Award and the Active Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides a good education, and has a good number of strengths and a few aspects for improvement. Parents are very supportive of the school and one wrote, 'I am very pleased with what the school offers the children and parents'. The headteacher has created a team of staff committed to the care of the pupils and to improving the school's provision so that pupils' learning increases.

From their slightly below average starting points in Year 3, pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, their standards are average in English, mathematics and science. This year, pupils' good rates of progress have further improved as the school has strengthened its provision such as by assessing pupils' progress in science in more detail and using this information to improve pupils' standards in scientific enquiry. Pupils' standards are above average in information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, and they say how much they enjoy school. Their behaviour is good and they are keen to learn, especially when the teaching is engaging and stimulating. By setting challenging targets and taking rigorous action, attendance has improved and is broadly average. Pupils eat healthily and take regular physical exercise at school. They feel safe, and report that staff quickly resolve any isolated incidents of bullying. Their good academic progress together with their strong social development prepares them well for their next stage of education.

The good teaching is effective in developing pupils' good attitudes to work and helping them make good progress. The skills of teaching assistants are used well to help pupils to learn. Classes are well managed, and teachers provide a wide variety of challenging tasks to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. In a few lessons, there are small weaknesses that result in a slight reduction in pupils' learning. There is some good use of marking, self-assessment and target setting to help pupils achieve well, but this is not consistent in all classes. The good curriculum includes a wide range of well-attended lunchtime and after-school clubs, regular visits and visitors, and some special topics based on drama and role play.

All adults provide good levels of care and support, especially for vulnerable pupils. As one parent wrote, 'The teachers are always ready to listen and any problems are dealt with quickly'. The progress of each pupil is carefully monitored in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils at risk of underachievement are given effective extra support. The school accurately diagnoses the wide range of personal and learning needs of pupils facing learning, behavioural and physical difficulties. There is a good range of carefully planned provision that meets the needs of these pupils and, consequently, they make good progress.

Leadership and management are good. Governance is good, and both supports and challenges the school. The school has effective links with a wide range of outside agencies and, for example, these provide expertise in assessment and teaching for pupils with more complex literacy and physical difficulties. Effective action has been taken to secure improvement since the previous inspection. The school has a good capacity for further improvement because its self-evaluation is accurate and its actions to secure improvement are well-chosen and carefully planned.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking and target setting are used consistently well throughout the school to help pupils achieve as much as they can.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils make consistently good progress in all lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good and improving progress while at the school. They are set challenging targets and these are mostly met. In 2007, the results of the national tests for the Year 6 pupils were broadly average in English, mathematics and science. When they had entered the school, these pupils' standards were slightly below average. Since then, pupils' standards on entry have risen each year. Pupils' progress is improving as the school has strengthened its provision in each subject and made more effective use of assessment to help pupils to learn. For example, improvements made to the teaching and assessment of pupils' work in scientific enquiry have resulted in pupils making good progress in interpreting data and drawing conclusions as part of their experimental work. Year 6 pupils are on track to reach national average standards by the summer. Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) because of expert teaching and effective use of good learning resources. Their standards are above average as shown by their imaginative and well designed web pages about the Tudors and films about a local nature reserve. Vulnerable pupils make good progress because they receive very good levels of care and strong support with their learning.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils are keen to learn, although occasionally some lose their concentration when activities are not interesting. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The teaching of Spanish and the links with a school in Malawi foster pupils' cultural development well. Pupils' social development is particularly strong, and they play and work well together. They show respect and care towards each other and make very good contributions to the school and wider communities. For example, Year 6 pupils run playground activities for younger pupils at break times as part of a well-planned scheme. Pupils enjoy being members of the school and class councils, and these organise support for charities as well as contributing to a good range of improvements in the school such as the purchase of the play equipment provided for lunchtimes.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Common strengths of all teaching are effective classroom management that helps pupils to behave and work well, and good use of teaching assistants to help pupils learning in all parts of lessons. In most lessons, teaching is enthusiastic and encouraging, setting challenging tasks and providing good opportunities for speaking and listening. In a few lessons, there were small weaknesses in teaching which resulted in a slight reduction in pupils' learning. For example, higher-attaining pupils made good progress in one lesson but would have made even more progress if the rapid pace of learning had been maintained for the whole time. In an English lesson where pupils' learning was outstanding, they were actively engaged in a sequence of interesting, challenging activities that were closely matched to their learning needs. As part of the work, pupils discussed and assessed each other's work before making their own

improvements. Some marking is of a high quality and makes clear to pupils what they have achieved and how they can improve their work, but this is not done consistently.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The learning activities meet the needs of all pupils, with some good provision for those pupils facing learning, behavioural and physical difficulties. The carefully planned work of teaching assistants and setting for English and mathematics helps to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is fostered by the wide range of clubs, the good range of enrichment activities, the links already made between subjects and the special topics that use drama and role play. For example, Year 6 pupils learn English, geography and design and technology during a topic in which they takes the roles of environmentally responsible travel agents. During the inspection, pupils worked in a planetarium that visited the school, and followed this up with some challenging science work. However, the planning of links between subjects is not yet complete. Pupils enjoy the Spanish lessons introduced this year.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The commitment of all staff ensures the pupils receive good care and guidance. This helps to build their self-confidence and ambition. Several parents wrote how their children had 'flourished in the caring environment'. The school makes very effective use of a wide range of external services to support the progress and personal development of vulnerable pupils. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and meet requirements. As a result, pupils feel safe. There are good transition arrangements for pupils with the neighbouring infant school so that pupils transfer confidently and assessment information is passed on quickly. Individual pupil's progress is carefully monitored in reading, writing and mathematics, and action is taken to tackle any underachievement. Most pupils know their termly targets for these subjects, but are less clear on the steps they need to take to achieve them. All classrooms have a display to show these targets and in some cases, the pupils' work helpfully exemplifies how they can be achieved.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher's leadership has secured the commitment of the staff to raising achievement and supporting all learners. One parent wrote that the very good headteacher is gradually improving all aspects of the school. Leadership and management responsibilities are allocated to all staff, and these responsibilities are carried out effectively. All subject leaders carry out a range of monitoring and evaluation activities, and have well structured subject development plans. However, they do not always record effectively the findings from their monitoring of pupils' work and this limits follow-up action. The accurate self-evaluation takes into account the views of staff, parents and pupils, and is used to identify the school's priorities for improvement. The school development plan is helping the school to improve pupils' learning although it is not always specific about how the successful achievement of targets is measured. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve well, and effectively helps pupils to overcome any barriers to learning that they face. The school uses its resources well. For example, the significant improvement in computer resources has resulted in pupils' high

standards in ICT. Because of a declining birth rate, the school's entry numbers are falling, and the budget is being managed well to cover any extra costs caused by this change.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	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

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

23 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leigh Beck Junior School, Canvey Island SS8 7TD

Mrs Robinson, Mr Pittman and I really enjoyed visiting your school and meeting Mr Bridge, the staff and many of you. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons, at playtimes and in meetings with the school council and members of Year 6. I am very grateful to so many of your parents for returning the questionnaires. It was interesting to hear from you that you like school, feel safe, enjoy working with computers, and appreciate all that the teachers and teaching assistants do for you.

All the adults look after you really well. You behave well and are keen to learn. You make good progress because teaching is usually good and teachers work hard to make lessons interesting. Mr Bridge and the staff are working hard to make the teaching even better, and it is good that they are doing that. We were impressed by your work, including what you do in ICT. Your teachers mark your work regularly but sometimes their comments do not always tell you exactly how to improve your work. Some of you have the skills to assess your own work and then make your own improvements, and this is very impressive. We have asked the school to look at ways of spreading this good marking and assessment more widely. It is good that you have targets to improve your reading, writing and mathematics.

The school provides some really interesting work for you to do, and your work in lessons is regularly supported by interesting visits and visitors. Many of you attend the lunchtime and after-school clubs.

You can help the school to improve by continuing to behave and work so well, by thinking carefully about what you need to do to achieve your targets and by acting on your teachers' comments about how to improve.

With best wishes for the rest of the school year

Mike Milton

Lead inspector