

Slindon CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125994
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	359984
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Brian Evans

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Elkin
Headteacher	Jane Walters
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 15 lessons and parts of lessons and observed all class teachers at least once. Meetings took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of governors, staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. The lead inspector observed the school's work and looked at documentation which included the school development plan, assessment information, safeguarding practices, curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work. He analysed the results of 35 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and took account of the views expressed by pupils in their responses.

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

- The quality of teaching in relation to the use of assessments of pupils' progress.
- The impact of the school's writing and mathematics improvement strategies.
- How the school sets its priorities and evaluates the impact of the extensive school improvement plan.

Information about the school

Slindon C of E is a very small primary school serving a rural area. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is well below average. Pupils are predominantly of White British origin. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A number of pupils in the school with special educational needs struggle with basic literacy or numeracy skills. Pupil mobility is above average.

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

Slindon C of E Primary is a satisfactory school. Attainment has improved significantly over the last three years and is now broadly average at the end of both key stages. The progress pupils make, given their starting points, overall is satisfactory. Significant improvements in progress are evident in English but are not as strong in mathematics. Clear tracking and assessment systems are beginning to have a positive impact on learning and teaching. As yet, teachers do not use the information gained from this system as a matter of course to challenge pupils in their work and to increase the rate at which they make progress, particularly in mathematics and writing. Pupils' skills in grammar and punctuation are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, and this inhibits their ability to write more complex sentences and paragraphs. Pupils know their targets for English and mathematics although these are not referred to frequently enough by teachers.

A high level of teamwork between teachers and support staff enables pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. ♦ Parents and carers share this view with one a parent commenting, 'All staff work extremely hard to make it a happy, successful school' ♦ teachers take your child as an individual and work out what their needs and sensitivities are and know how to help them.' Pupils are fully aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and staying safe.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving, with a number of good features observed during the inspection. Reception teaching is good. Teachers and support assistants focus on developing pupils' strengths as independent learners. For example, teachers ask the pupils to comment on and try out their own ideas based on their previous learning before taking them through new processes. Parents and carers ♦ confirm a good partnership with the school and that their children enjoy school. Attendance is above average. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, along with improving teaching, are the key to the improving outcomes.

Care, guidance and support are excellent. Pupils transferring from other schools settle in quickly and well and older pupils support younger children with great sensitivity. The learning mentors support the settling in of new pupils and the transition of pupils through to secondary school well. Pupils have good opportunities to engage effectively with those from different ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds in another United Kingdom school and in their local village community activities. ♦ They understand that they share common values. However, global links are not as well developed, but there is an action plan to strengthen this strand of community cohesion. The school has a good reputation in the local community.

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The headteacher receives good support and challenge from the governing body, who diligently undertake their duties. The headteacher is leading by example and has set a clear agenda for improvement. The improvement plan clearly demonstrates that leaders have undertaken a rigorous evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have put in place actions that target improving the outcomes for pupils. This is having an impact on improving provision and pupil outcomes and demonstrates good capacity improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers use the assessments of pupils' learning to set challenging tasks and increase the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Improve writing, grammar and punctuation in Years 3 to 6.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Progress seen in lessons and pupils' exercise books show that pupils' achievement, although overall satisfactory, is improving. Reading levels are above average and the first half an hour of each day sees a great many pupils reading enthusiastically with adults on a one-to-one basis. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because there is good practice in setting tasks that match their learning needs. Pupils of all ability levels are clear about their individual targets and what they have to do to improve. In the mixed-age Reception and Key Stage 1 class, good learning takes place because pupils are well informed about what they need to do to improve their writing. Pupils are also clearly learning much from each other.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by all adults and results in pupils being caring and considerate.. Assemblies promote positive aspects of pupils' work in the school. Pupils speak very highly of the support they receive and are polite and well mannered in welcoming visitors to the school. A key element in their very positive attitude to learning is their excellent behaviour. A further strength of the school is the support that older pupils give to the younger children, which makes a strong contribution to the school community as a whole. For example, Year 6 pupils read to the reception group at the start of the day on one day a week. The school council is consulted regularly on matters of school policy, for example, in defining the school behaviour policy and in the developments of the outside learning areas. Currently the council is focused on planning markings for the newly extended area of the hard playground.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory although improving, with good practice in certain parts of the school. Teachers display good subject knowledge. Lessons are introduced effectively in the three classes, after which appropriate tasks are usually set for pupils in their different age groups. These, however, are not always as challenging as they could be. Sometimes the whole class support one another in an activity, for example in the nativity play performed in front of parents, carers and older pupils, where the youngest pupils in Reception Years 1 and 2 worked as a team to provide a good drama performance.. Sessions usually end by bringing the whole class together to highlight success and points for review. This reinforces learning by giving pupils the criteria to help them assess their own work. Pupils understand the importance of self-assessment and peer assessment and the eventual moderation by the class teacher. Marking is usually constructive, particularly in English. Pupils routinely respond well to the comments, which help them to improve their work.

The curriculum is good and cross-curricular approaches, where themes and topics are used to link subjects, are well developed. A very good display of the Roman period gave a good indication of cross-curricular planning. The topic-based approach motivates and engages pupils well and helps them to apply what they learn. Staff are using the improving skills of the pupils in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology and introducing them more frequently to real-life and problem-solving

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situations. Parents and carers ♦ are very appreciative of the school clubs which involve specialist visitors and of the visits to places outside the school. ♦ The varied and well-attended clubs help to promote effectively pupils' personal development, as do the more formal physical education activities, such as tag rugby, football and kwik cricket. As a result pupils are active, participate well and enjoy a very healthy lifestyle in school.

Those pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable experience success because of carefully matched individual learning programmes, guidance from an experienced special needs coordinator and the good partnership with external agencies. Teachers and learning mentors work very closely alongside parents and carers ♦ to monitor their children's attendance and emotional health. Pupils happily turn to an adult when they have a problem. The administrators on reception are an effective and important link between parents and carers and the school. The staff team uses a wide range of skills such as counselling and play therapy to support pupils' emotional needs extremely well. This, coupled with the school's links with outside agencies such as educational psychologists and with its link secondary schools, ensures excellent care, guidance and support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The positive impact of the work of the headteacher over the past three years can be seen in the creation of a school ethos that is friendly, welcoming and mutually supportive. Statutory duties are reviewed regularly and meet requirements, including the good procedures relating to safeguarding. Policies and their impact are updated regularly to ensure that they reflect best practice and are followed consistently by staff. The effective promotion of equal opportunities has improved particularly the performance of pupils who need additional support. The school has improved pupils' attainment over the past three years and is well set to sustain this improvement.

Professional support and staff training days are regularly used to raise awareness of child protection and teaching and curriculum issues. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The school has a good partnership with parents and carers and with the local community. Governors carefully examine the impact of policies on the school's work and hold the school accountable for its performance. The promotion and impact of community cohesion have some outstanding features, for example the pupils' charitable contribution to Haiti. Pupils study and understand that communities and cultures in other parts of the

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world and in the United Kingdom can be different and are led to a positive and constructive community appreciation.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception children experience a well-planned curriculum and a broad and balanced diet of play-based activities. Through this, children develop positive attitudes to learning. They interact well with each other and adults. Children are developing good personal qualities such as concentration and perseverance through the activities they undertake. They are building their skills across all areas of learning, applying these to real-life situations, and are making good progress. The Reception and Key Stage 1 teacher works effectively with the headteacher and her support staff, tracking individual children's progress in their learning profiles, identifying learning needs and ensuring that progress is well supported. All adults contribute information to children's individual learning profiles and assessment notes are made throughout the week. Children display excellent behaviour. They are given appropriate options, for example to play with the construction toys in and out of the classroom. In this way any misbehaviour is nipped in the bud before it becomes serious. Adults are sensitive to the children's needs and so activities are a good balance of those led by adults and those initiated by the children. Outdoor play provides further opportunities to develop their skills across all areas of learning. The staff work closely with parents to provide high levels of care.

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

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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

A high proportion of families returned questionnaires. In their responses all parents and carers state that their children enjoy school and feel very safe. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers were positive about the school and its impact on their children's well-being. The quality of pastoral care, the curriculum and opportunities for extra-curricular activities were highly praised. In their comments, a very small minority of parents and carers expressed concern about whether their suggestions were taken seriously together with a few concerns about their child's progress in mixed-age classes. The inspectors found the adults in the school listened to parents and children very carefully and that work in lessons was set to meet the individual needs of children satisfactorily. They found also that there were clear procedures for parents and carers to approach the school about their children's work.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Slindon C of E 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 35 out of 42 families completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 53 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	66	12	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	49	16	46	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	46	13	37	5	14	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	54	12	34	4	11	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	49	45	43	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	54	16	46	0	0	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)	17	49	13	37	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	51	13	37	4	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	49	15	43	3	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	49	13	37	3	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	60	10	29	3	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	60	11	31	3	9	0	0

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 all 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



9 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Slindon C of E Primary School, Slindon BN18 0QU

We are writing to let you know how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. We judge Slindon C of E Primary to be a satisfactory school.

These are the main findings of the inspection.

- We saw that your behaviour is good and that you have a really good understanding of how to be healthy. You enjoy a full range of physical education activities. You told us through your questionnaire responses that you enjoy school and feel very safe. We could see this in your enthusiastic approach to learning both in the classroom and around the school.
- The very high levels of care, guidance and support provided by the school allow you to flourish as learners and develop high levels of independence.
- The partnerships between the school, your parents and carers and yourselves are good.
- Teaching is satisfactory, including much that is good.

Over the past year you have made satisfactory progress in mathematics and in writing. We have asked the school to build on this good start and enable you to aim at good progress in your mathematics and for Years 3 to 6 in your writing, grammar and punctuation. We know that you will continue to work with your teachers and all adults to maintain your enthusiastic approach to learning.

Yours sincerely ♦♦♦♦♦♦

Brian Evans

Lead inspector

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