

Punnetts Town Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114414
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	357533
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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	72
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Holland
Headteacher	Maria Maslin
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2007
School address	Battle Road Punnetts Town, Heathfield, East Sussex Heathfield, Heathfield TN21 9DE
Telephone number	01435830361
Fax number	01435830361
Email address	office@punnettstown.e-sussex.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. During the inspection, eight lessons and four teachers were observed. Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers, and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, provision for those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, and minutes of governing body meetings. In addition, questionnaires from 46 parents and carers, and others from staff and pupils, were analysed.

The school is part of a federation with Broad Oak Primary School. Separate inspection teams inspected the two schools simultaneously.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for assessment and what they reveal about pupils' progress, especially in writing for the more able pupils. reveal about pupils' progress, especially in writing for the more able pupils.
- Pupils' personal development and the effectiveness of the school's measures to enhance pupils' cultural development. enhance pupils' cultural development.
- The effectiveness of the federation in improving the curriculum and contributing to the overall outcomes for pupils.
- The effectiveness of the leaders and managers at all levels, including the governors, in enabling continuity and improvement, in the context of the federation.

Information about the school

Punnetts Town Community Primary School is a much smaller-than-average village school with two full-time teachers and four part-time members of the teaching staff. There are three classes with mixed-age groups, with some year groups having very few children. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with many choosing to come to the school from some distance away. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A significant and increasing proportion of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These needs include behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed Reception-Year/Year 1 and 2 class.

The school federated with another local school in January 2008. This brought a new headteacher to Punnetts Town, who had previously been head at the federated school. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2009. Punnetts Town holds the Artsmark Gold and Healthy Schools Status. The school building houses the independent village pre-school, which was not part of this inspection.

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

Punnetts Town is a good school with a number of considerable strengths. The pastoral support, guidance and care provided for pupils are outstanding. As a result, by the time pupils leave the school, they are mature and very thoughtful young people who make a good contribution to the school and the local community. One parent summed up the views of many, reflecting the school's excellent engagement with parents and carers, by writing, 'This is my third child and she is thriving at Punnetts Town. The headteacher has been instrumental in moving the school forward. The existing staff team work well together and in my opinion provide a warm, caring and nurturing environment in which to learn and grow.'

This positive reputation in the community and improved pupil outcomes reflect the headteacher's and staff's shared aspirations for the school, in particular since the federation with another local school. The wide range of systems and strategies put into place to address the school's well-identified priorities has resulted in considerable improvement, in the last three years and since the last inspection. For example, there has been marked improvement in the quality of teaching overall and in provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Given its track record of improvement and innovation in many areas, together with its detailed and effective self-evaluation procedures, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Due to the effective organisation and careful early assessments, pupils begin to make good progress from the moment they enter the Reception class. This is built on well throughout the school. Pupils' attainment is above average and the school's results in national tests in 2010 were in line with the school's records and expectations. As the leaders had identified, the standards reached in writing were below those in other subjects. The planned changes and systems they have put in place have already begun to close the small difference.

All staff work hard to create attractive classrooms with imaginative displays and, therefore, provide a very positive learning environment. The quality of teaching is good overall and lessons are planned to make sure that all pupils enjoy learning. The curriculum covers all the required subjects and is enhanced by an excellent range of additional activities, visits and visitors. The school, rightly, has a priority to modify the curriculum to give pupils increasing opportunities to practise and consolidate their writing, problem solving and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Innovations have been made in the curriculum through using the expertise of staff from both schools in the federation. However, these changes are not yet being implemented consistently throughout the school. Although excellent teaching and learning using the approaches are evident in some lessons, teachers' planning does not always ensure that pupils in all years, particularly

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those who are more able, are provided with activities that consistently excite and challenge them.

Safeguarding procedures are outstanding and pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and around the school and feel very safe, reflecting the staff's high expectations and highly effective level of care and moral guidance. Pupils have a good awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. One particularly notable aspect of the school's provision is its work with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The very effective leadership and very caring teaching assistants ensure that those pupils with specific learning needs are supported very well through identifying their needs early so they make very good progress consistently.

The school does much to promote its place in the local community and has excellent partnerships with many organisations and local businesses. Its audit of community cohesion, undertaken by governing body and staff, is underpinned by a careful analysis of the school's context. The links with schools abroad have begun to be established well and pupils' awareness of and preparation for living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom are also being developed well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that by the end of the year, the changes in the curriculum are embedded so that:
 - pupils, especially the more able, are given the maximum opportunities to practise and reinforce their skills and learning in English, mathematics and ICT
 - the exciting and relevant activities that are linked across subject areas are present in all lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter the school with skills levels and understanding that vary, but are usually broadly in line with those expected for their age and immediately make good progress. Pupils of all abilities are generally motivated well by the ideas and resources presented and are keen to please their teachers and other adults. This is a reflection of the strong moral code of the school that encourages attentiveness and hard work and enables most pupils to make good progress as they move through the school. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson in the Years 5/6 class, pupils listened well to the teacher's effective opening and appreciated the great deal of freedom they were given to respond in their own way and at their own pace. That led to some insightful conclusions about the different types of graphs and how they could be plotted best. Pupils were then enabled to choose for themselves what they thought they should move on to in the next part of the lesson.

Targets set for pupils' progress are used well and pupils are well monitored. Pupils' work in classrooms shows that not only is progress in English, mathematics and science good across the school, but also that pupils do very well in other subjects. For example, outstanding displays show the strength of art and design and reflect the school's award of the Artsmark Gold.

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Pupils' high levels of attendance help them to make good progress overall and to achieve well. The pupils appreciate the good opportunities to participate in sporting activities that encourage their positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy and have ensured the school's Healthy Schools award. The school, successfully, instills in the pupils a good spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding, which accounts for their outstanding behaviour and positive attitudes to school. A striking feature that the pupils displayed at all times during the inspection was the caring way they look after each other. The gradual developments in the curriculum are giving pupils the opportunities to develop their ability to apply their basic skills for a broad range of purposes, but these are not yet fully embedded in all classes. However, pupils' excellent behaviour, outstanding understanding of how to stay safe and above-average attainment mean they are well 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	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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?

In almost all lessons, there are strong elements that help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. In the large majority of cases, teachers set out clear objectives and lessons are well managed. Pupils experience a good mix of listening to the teacher, responding to questions and opportunities to discuss their work among themselves. This experience, along with good strategies to manage pupils' behaviour, means that pupils are motivated and display good attitudes to learning. For example, in a Years 2/3/4 ICT lesson

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on using remotely controlled equipment and computer graphics to draw angles and shapes, the pupils were organised very effectively into different groups so that they were all challenged well at their level. They concentrated very well and, as a result, all made good progress.

Assessment procedures to check pupils' progress have improved markedly since the federation. However, the information is not always used in conjunction with the innovations in the curriculum to plan activities that consistently interest and meet pupils' differing needs. When implemented with enthusiasm, the curriculum provides effective opportunities for pupils' all-round development. That was clear in some mathematics lessons observed during the inspection, where the variety of activities and the opportunities for pupils to make their own well-defined choices were very good. However, pupils' progress slows occasionally as such innovative planning is not harnessed to the same degree in all subjects.

Throughout the school, very positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute to the supportive ethos for study. As a result, the atmosphere for learning created by the whole staff is positive and caring. The impact of the school's outstanding support, guidance and care is evident in the pupils' good social development. Potentially vulnerable pupils, often coming in from other schools, are extremely well supported and the school works very effectively in partnership with a wide range of agencies to meet their needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 driving force behind the school's success is the high quality of leadership provided by the headteacher, supported by the good leadership of the governing body. All staff have embraced the changes fully following the creation of the federation and teamwork is strong. As one member of staff wrote, 'The federation has made such a huge difference it is the best thing we have ever done.' One way in which everyone follows the outstanding example of the headteacher is to relate effectively to all pupils, parents and carers and, in particular, the local community. Indeed, partnerships are excellent and focused totally on enhancing the experiences and outcomes for pupils.

The governing body has been rigorous in its work to enable the success of the federation and is involved fully in all developments. It supports the school effectively and brings a wide range of experience and skills to support and hold the school to account when necessary. The opinions of parents and carers are noted very carefully and acted upon. The work of the school's parent-teacher association is extremely effective and also very highly valued.

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The school is very successful in its efforts to promote equality of opportunity and tackle any discrimination. All are valued and supported to achieve their best, irrespective of their social, faith or ethnic group. Excellent attention is paid by managers at all levels to ensure the highest quality of safety and care for the pupils. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are firmly in place and carried out extremely thoroughly and regularly and all members of staff are well trained in child protection routines. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. Clear actions are in place for promoting pupils' understanding of local, national and global perspectives.

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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
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 schooling in the Reception class and achieve well. They settle happily into school because of good links with parents and carers and because of the strong nurturing environment. Staff make every effort to ensure all children feel welcome. The good relationships with parents and carers are maintained on a daily basis as staff make a concerted effort to talk to parents and carers to enable them to understand how their children learn.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is managed well and clear priorities are set for improvement. The enhancements in provision and outcomes since the previous inspection are testament both to the effective leadership of the coordinator and the good teaching. In particular, the many plans for the outside space have been carried out to very good effect. Planning is good because careful account is taken of the regular ongoing assessments of children's progress. Effective teamwork provides good routines, high expectations of behaviour and achievement, and excellent relationships. Consequently, children develop well personally and engage well with their learning.

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Staff make good use of the facilities, including the outside area, to extend children's learning, particularly their climbing and physical skills. The balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities is good. Children's language skills are being developed well, with a clear focus on vocabulary. Children enjoy learning very much, but there are occasional missed opportunities, when the differences between activities for the Reception-age children are not developed clearly in relation to those planned for the older pupils in the class. Where this distinction is made, as in an excellent music lesson observed during the inspection, the children make outstanding progress and enjoy themselves thoroughly.

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

An above-average proportion of parents or carers returned the questionnaire and the overwhelming majority and those who spoke to the inspection team are very happy with the school. They consider that the school has a dedicated team of staff and the headteacher leads and manages the school very well. They say that the school has a very warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and almost all feel their children make good progress. Inspection evidence shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good or better progress. Parents and carers are particularly impressed with the pastoral support their children receive. This reflects the findings of the inspection. The very small number of constructive parental criticisms were shared and discussed with the headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Punnetts Town Community 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 72 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	61	17	37	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	76	8	17	3	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	70	13	28	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	63	17	37	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	65	16	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	50	21	46	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	59	19	41	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)	23	50	19	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	54	21	46	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	41	25	54	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	48	24	52	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	72	13	28	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	67	15	33	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Punnetts Town Community Primary School, Heathfield TN21 9DE

I thank you for your help when we inspected your school and want to let you know what we found out. Yours is a good school. We enjoyed our time spent in your lessons and talking to some of you. We also looked at the work of the school and talked to the staff and governors. We were interested in what your parents and carers think of your school, and we particularly enjoyed listening to what you had to say.

These are some of the things your school does particularly well.

- You all make good progress and enjoy your learning.
- The staff at the school work hard and the headteacher is doing a good job, especially now you are so closely linked with another school.
- The way you behave is excellent and you work and play well together.
- You feel safe at school and you know how to be healthy.
- You are taught well and you help your school to be a better place to play and learn.
- You have a good understanding of right and wrong and look after each other well.

We have agreed with your school that there are some things that will help it to improve. We have asked the headteacher to make sure that teachers all make their lessons as exciting as possible. We want them to set you work that closely matches your interests and needs, especially those of you who find the work quite easy. You can help by continuing to listen carefully and take note of what they say so that you can all make the best possible progress in your learning.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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