

Pashley Down Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114461
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	357547
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Bartleman

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Sargent
Headteacher	Jennifer Cruse
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited an assembly and 20 lessons, observing 10 teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan. Inspectors analysed 110 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

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

- How effective is the quality of teaching in promoting learning and progress in writing for all pupils?
- How effectively has the curriculum been developed to match pupils' interests and needs and contribute to raising attainment?
- What are the outstanding features of provision for personal development and how do these impact on pupil outcomes?
- To what extent is the Early Years Foundation Stage preparing children for their later education?

Information about the school

Pashley Down Infant School is a larger-than-average infant school that admits children from a wide range of pre-school settings. Most pupils come from a White British background, and there are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There is a before and after-school club managed by the governing body.

The school has achieved the Healthy School award, the Green Tree School Gold award and Dyslexia Friendly status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Pashley Down Infant School provides its pupils with an outstanding education, a view which is endorsed almost unanimously by parents and carers. Under the exceptional leadership of the headteacher, a highly effective staff team has been developed with consistently high expectations of all pupils. As a result of excellent provision, pupils flourish and quickly develop the skills to succeed as well as a passion for learning.

Self-evaluation and monitoring procedures are firmly established and are clearly understood and well used by staff. These comprehensive quality assurance systems enable timely and accurate information about pupils' progress and other aspects of the school's work to be used effectively. Leaders at all levels make an excellent contribution to school improvement. The governing body is exceptionally well informed and influential in its role. Together with the headteacher, it provides outstanding leadership and management. It holds an excellent strategic view of what is needed to develop and improve the school even further. The school's strong track record of excellent outcomes for pupils over time and the significant progress made since the previous inspection give the school outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

From broadly average starting points, children get off to a strong start at Pashley Down, making good progress, particularly in communication, literacy and language, before they commence Year 1. Provision for children in the Reception classes is good. As a result, children soon develop confidence and take secure steps in developing basic skills. There is a broad range of activities on offer to children, although there are some inconsistencies in provision between the classes as the new leaders develop their roles. Consistently good or better teaching and an innovative and stimulating curriculum enable pupils' progress to accelerate during Key Stage 1 so they reach high levels of attainment by the time they leave to go to junior school. Progress in writing has been slower than in reading and mathematics in the recent past. However, consistently applied strategies, including more opportunities for extended writing within real contexts, have led to rapid improvement and attainment in writing is rising. In a small minority of lessons, activities are not consistently tailored to individuals' learning needs.

Outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils and their families are key factors in the school's success and contribute strongly to exceptional personal development. Pupils feel exceptionally safe and, considering their age, have extensive knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Children in the school behave extremely well. They enjoy each other's company and are routinely polite and considerate towards one another. Pupils' positive views of, and pride in, their school are reflected in high rates of attendance. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning at junior school both academically, through their proficiency in literacy and numeracy, and socially.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of consistently outstanding lessons by tailoring pupils' activities more closely to individuals' next steps in learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- Develop the role of Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator so that there are fewer inconsistencies between the Reception classes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils at Pashley Down enjoy school greatly and are extremely enthusiastic about all aspects of their learning. Pupils build skills, knowledge and understanding rapidly, especially in reading. They are eager to learn and to support each other in their learning. Progress in lessons is at least good and usually excellent because of the pupils' enjoyment and engagement that is immediately apparent. Pupils rise well to the numerous challenges in lessons and work constructively together, discussing one another's ideas and answers so that thinking is often at a high level.

When children enter the school, their knowledge and skills are typical for their age, although their skills in communication, literacy and language are often below those expected. The progress made by all groups of pupils, including the more able, is outstanding. By the time they leave in Year 2, attainment is high due to the high-quality teaching they receive. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were highly motivated and enjoyed learning and practising multiplication and division. The well-planned lesson proceeded at a rapid pace, challenged all pupils and ensured rapid development of understanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make very good progress due to a range of highly tailored support programmes that have been exceptionally well delivered by teachers, support staff and outside agencies.

Overall, the school has been very successful in maintaining pupils' high achievement in reading and mathematics and in developing attainment in writing. For such young children, they have excellent levels of concentration and are able to apply themselves well in demanding tasks for sustained periods of time. The well-planned lessons, which are typical of those seen during the inspection, enable pupils of different abilities to make equally good progress.

Pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding of what it means to eat healthily and they participate enthusiastically in the wide range of extra-curricular activities which are much enjoyed by pupils; this is reflected in Pashley Down's Healthy School status. The school council offers the chance for a good number of pupils to exercise leadership roles within the school community and also to actively support charities. They are able to manage a small budget which is used to implement agreed ideas, such as buying new equipment for the playground. Pupils contribute well to the school as sports leaders and librarians, and to the local community through their cultural and inter-school activities. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is clearly evident in lessons, assemblies and through the mature way in which they relate to, and communicate with, other children and with adults, including visitors to the school. For their age, they have a very clear appreciation of religious and cultural diversity within the local area, although awareness of faiths and cultures further afield is less well developed.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

Pupils make rapid and sustained progress at Pashley Down because the quality of teaching is of a high standard. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge is used to great effect to plan stimulating and engaging lessons which effectively provide ample active learning opportunities for all pupils. They make effective links to prior learning and explain learning objectives clearly so that pupils are aware of the purpose of lessons. Teachers draw on pupils' first-hand experiences, such as school trips, to devise interesting contexts for pupils' learning and use questioning effectively to extend learning. Resources, including computer 'notebooks', are used well to promote both independent and collaborative work. Pupils are given excellent feedback both in books and orally during lessons. Consequently, pupils routinely know what they need to do to improve their work.

The well-constructed and imaginative curriculum makes a strong contribution to outstanding outcomes for both boys and girls. The outside area, including the newly developed woodland area, is used extremely well to develop curriculum opportunities which excite, interest and enthuse the pupils, and this has been recognised in the Green Tree School award. There is an excellent balance between the provision of high-quality activities to promote and develop literacy and numeracy skills with imaginative activities to stimulate artistic, creative and physical development. Intervention programmes for pupils who find some aspects of learning difficult, such as Busy Bees and the Nurture Groups, are good examples of this successful balance. The well-established thematic approach

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enables pupils to readily make links between different subjects. Music is a particular strength of the school, with pupils singing in a variety of productions every year. The curriculum is flexible, continuously under review and benefits from the school's excellent links with other schools and partnership organisations, especially in music and the arts. For example, links with local independent schools have enabled more-able pupils to participate in group work investigating 'Kitchen Chemistry' and architecture design. There are numerous trips and visits in the local area, and out-of-school-hours provision, including the before- and after-school club, is wide-ranging and of excellent quality.

Well-deployed and highly skilled teaching assistants and the strong teamwork established between them and class teachers are key features of the school's outstanding care, guidance and support. There are well-established and consistently applied systems in place to ensure effective exchange of information with external agencies. Support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is exemplary. Consequently, these pupils thrive, make excellent progress and are able to take full advantage of all the school has to offer. Transition arrangements with the partner junior school are excellent and very highly regarded by parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and all the staff are part of a coherent team in which all are strongly committed to promoting the best outcomes for pupils. Morale within the whole staff body is exceptionally high, as reflected in responses to inspection questionnaires, and this fosters an extremely positive and enabling environment where staff are keen to implement developments. The school has an excellent understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement through rigorous monitoring and evaluation. Consequently, the leadership has embedded a culture of striving for continuous improvement, checking the quality of the teaching and learning, and deploying resources excellently.

The school engages exceptionally well with parents and carers and involves them fully in every aspect of school life. It is no surprise that the school is held with such high regard in the local community. The school's provision for the promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding, largely due to the detailed understanding of each pupil, and its importance is understood by all. Procedures for ensuring safeguarding, including risk assessments, are robust, very effective and comprehensively understood by all staff. The governing body's high level of involvement in day-to-day school life, through frequent visits and monitoring, gives it a very strong basis on which to inform its strategic planning. Parents and carers

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expressed a very high level of satisfaction in the leadership of the school in their questionnaire responses, with almost all stating they were happy with the way the school is led and managed. One parental comment stated, 'I am very happy with school, it is well led and staff are very approachable. I have found they are caring and supportive with my child's life.'

The school is welcoming and inclusive, and there have been no instances of discrimination. The strengthening partnerships between the school and groups within Eastbourne, as seen in events such as the school's participation in the town's arts exhibitions, provide evidence of the school's good contribution to community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
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	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good early adult intervention and support enable children to adopt quickly the routines needed for good learning and effective social development. Consequently, children make good or better progress by the time they start Key Stage 1. Children develop very positive attitudes to learning, are very well behaved and cooperate well with their classmates and with adults.

Children feel extremely safe and secure in a positive learning environment. Since the last inspection, facilities for the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved and this has extended the range and scope for learning, particularly in the outside area. Staff provide an interesting range of learning activities both in and out of the classroom. Children are motivated and thoroughly enjoy their learning. This was seen during the inspection when the children 'lost their teddy bear'. This prompted much discussion, poster making and detective work, which developed speaking and listening skills and vocabulary extremely well. When the teddy was eventually found in a box, the children wrote stories to explain how he came to be in a box. This coherent and child-led curriculum motivates children

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well. The children are taught well and there is an effective blend of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. The new Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has already carried out a review of provision and has well-thought-out plans for addressing inconsistencies between the classes and to improve provision further but this has not had time to take full effect.

Good leadership and management ensure that the safety and welfare of children are paramount. Personal contact with parents and carers is maintained on a daily basis, which enables any emerging issues or concerns to be dealt with efficiently. Consequently, parents and carers express a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of care and education provided.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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

The proportion of parents and carers who returned a completed questionnaire is average for an infant school of this size. An overwhelming majority of the responses were positive, with most stating that overall, they are happy with their children's experience at the school. All said they believe their children are safe at school and enjoy school, and the vast majority said that the school is led and managed well. Inspectors found many aspects of the school to be outstanding, thus endorsing these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pashley Down Infant 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 299 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	81	20	18	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	95	86	15	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	59	54	46	42	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	65	36	33	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	82	75	26	24	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	70	64	36	33	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	73	66	37	34	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)	80	73	27	25	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	77	70	31	28	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	58	38	35	3	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	63	57	39	35	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	84	76	23	21	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	84	17	15	1	1	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.



29 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pashley Down Infant School, Eastbourne, BN20 8NX

We would like to thank all of you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors judge that you go to a school which gives you an outstanding education.

These are the main things that we found out about your school:

- Your school is welcoming and sets a positive climate for your learning.
- You enjoy school, and your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent.
- You have very good relationships with the adults who take good care of you.
- You feel very safe in school and have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles.
- You make excellent contributions to your school and community.
- Almost all of your parents and carers are pleased with your experience at school.
- Your attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2 is high, and your progress across the school is outstanding.

We have also asked your school to make some further improvements:

- Increase the number of lessons which are outstanding.
- Make sure that the children in the different Reception classes have the chance to do the same things.

All of you can help, too, by working hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your school will be making. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Bartleman

Lead inspector

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