

# Chiddingly Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	124851
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	388260
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Michael Burghart

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Brundle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Elliot
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	October 2010
<b>School address</b>	Muddles Green Chiddingly Lewes BN8 6HN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01825 872307
<b>Fax number</b>	01825 872682
<b>Email address</b>	officer@chiddingly.e-sussex.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	29–30 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	388260



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Burghart

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspector observed seven lessons, over a period of three and a half hours, three of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. During the observations four different teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with school leaders, pupils and members of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, looked at school assessment data, planning documents and minutes of governors' meetings. He met informally with parents and carers, there being no questionnaires issued for this section 8, deemed section 5, inspection.

## Information about the school

This is a well-below-average-sized primary school serving a wide rural area. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs, with school action plus and statement support, is broadly average but this varies widely across small year groups. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. Numbers on roll declined following the last full inspection when the school was found to be in need of special measures. This resulted in a move from four to three mixed-age classes. Currently there are two children in Reception taught in the same class as Year 1 pupils. The school meets the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Since the last full inspection there have been many changes of staff, including two interim headteachers. None of the current class teachers were at the school at that time. The present permanent headteacher was appointed in January 2012 and the deputy headteacher took up her post at Easter 2012.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

### Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is no longer of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is providing its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are now demonstrating the capacity to secure improvement. It is not a good school because, despite improvements, some pupils in Year 2 (particularly boys and those who are more able) do not always achieve as well as they might with regard to writing and problem solving in mathematics. Schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Notwithstanding a weaker profile in Key Stage 1, achievement is satisfactory overall with strengths in Key Stage 2 where gaps in pupils’ previous learning have been addressed, progress is good and attainment is at least average. Provision for those in Reception has been improved from inadequate to satisfactory. Although opportunities for learning through play outdoors restrict some aspects of development, children make good progress overall.
- Much of the teaching observed was good and, in a major turn around since 2010, none was inadequate. The impact of teaching and its leadership over time is satisfactory but improvements, most notably made over the last year, mask significant historical weaknesses.
- Pupils behave well in and out of class and enjoy learning. They feel very safe and appreciate that they are well cared for. A strong emphasis on promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a good contribution to pupils’ personal development and the school’s ethos. Attendance has been systematically improved and is now broadly average.
- The journey out of special measures has been built upon good management over the last two years. Senior leaders are well supported by governors and staff who are ambitious for pupils’ academic as well as personal success. The headteacher leads the school with a vision that is infectious and underpins high expectations and rising standards. The management of staff performance is effective in bringing about improvement. Leaders have a keen awareness of strengths and areas for development because monitoring is rigorous and accurate.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the initiatives already proving successful to raise attainment at the end of Year 2 and improve progress rates in writing and mathematics by:
  - providing more effective support, in particular for boys and some more able pupils, in order to improve basic skills by encouraging them to write for a greater variety of purposes across the curriculum
  - giving pupils more guidance and opportunity to work independently to solve mathematical problems.
- Improve, as planned, the outdoor learning and play area for those children in Reception.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Most children's skills on entry to the school are about what is expected for their age, but this varies widely in very small year groups. Progress is good in Reception and increasingly so in Year 1. Children are emerging as readers and, to a slightly lesser extent, writers, and their personal development is good. They respond well to the much improved curriculum on offer, with positive effects on creative development and communication skills. In a well-taught session on the theme of pirates, work was well planned to cover all aspects of the early years curriculum. Children enjoyed choosing and sharing activities and their learning was good. This marks a considerable improvement and benefits children's capacity to work and play independently.

As a result of improvements to provision, overall progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. However, writing, especially for boys and some more able pupils, remains below average at the end of Year 2. Some aspects of mathematical problem solving are still restricted by pupils' lack of experience and confidence. Attainment in reading is average at the end of Year 2.

There is good evidence of rapid progress in English and mathematics for pupils of all abilities between Years 4 and 6. This has been sustained for the last eighteen months, with a rising trend of achievement. Reading, literacy in general and pupils' numeracy skills are above average by the time pupils leave Year 6. More able pupils do well, with a majority reaching above average levels. In a mathematics lesson focusing on data handling, perceptive questioning made pupils think before answering and prompted good quality learning. Pupils of all abilities, but especially the more able, enjoyed being well challenged to draw conclusions. They worked well together to analyse information and compare findings with their predictions.

Any pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs make the same progress as others in their year groups as a result of good quality learning. Recent improvements to ways in which they are supported, for example in being shown how to match letters to sounds, are having positive impacts on the quality of their learning.

Parents and carers spoken to expressed positive views about their children's progress. They made a point of noting their confidence in the school's improving picture. A small minority of parents and carers are disappointed by the move to three classes. The inspection finds that numbers on roll, and financial and staffing constraints, made this inevitable and that current improvements to provision are reducing any potentially negative effects on learning opportunities.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory over time. Weaknesses in the past are offset by current good practice. As a result of better curriculum planning and more effective use of assessment to track pupils' progress, inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Lessons move with good pace and questioning explores pupils' understanding. Staff set work according to ability and pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. The vast majority of pupils, and those parents and carers spoken to, believe that teaching is much more effective than it was and rightly feel that some is of good quality. In a well-taught science lesson in Years 2 and 3 the teacher organised activities well, successfully promoting pupils' skills of planning fair tests. Pupils responded with good attitudes and behaviour, eagerly checking temperatures against their estimations in areas around the site in varying degrees of shade. They were enthralled and relished the responsibility they were given. Progress in the session was good and levels of cooperation, noted as lacking in previous monitoring visits, were conducive to secure learning. Nevertheless, ineffective teaching over time has created a legacy of underachievement most obvious at the end of Key Stage 1, with gaps in pupils' learning that are difficult to narrow. Improvements, which began at the start of this school year and have become more rapid recently, are yet to ensure that more able pupils and some boys consistently reach levels which they are capable of, for example in writing and mathematics.

Provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is satisfactory. This has been improved by better sharing of expertise to model how teaching assistants can best support pupils. Relationships are good and individual education plans are securely based on assessment information. Throughout the school teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. They have benefited from professional training and the good example set by current teachers. This is especially so in terms of expectations and open-ended questioning and the effective ways in which spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour is good and that pupils rightfully feel safe and that this has long been the case. Staff, parents and carers agree that such standards have always been a feature of the school. Attitudes to learning are typically good. This is most notable in two out of the three classes. It is increasingly becoming so in Years 2 and 3. Here, until moves to make the curriculum more relevant and interesting were introduced, some pupils had a tendency to be off task and show too little pride in their work. Some bad habits have been difficult to break, but there is evidence of substantial improvement and more than enough positive

examples across the rest of the school for behaviour to be judged good overall.

Pupils report that bullying is rare. They note that there have been cases of name calling and some low level physical incidences, but do not refer to other forms of bullying, such as any that might feature racial, homophobic or cyber issues. Pupils know who to turn to with a problem and all those spoken to detailed how well leaders and managers seek to resolve difficulties. Pupils know how to stay safe on line and have a good understanding of 'stranger' issues.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have successfully built on the improvements of the past two years to develop leadership and management. They benefit from consistently effective support from officers and consultants of the local authority. The headteacher's drive and ambition, deep rooted in monitoring and evaluation, effectively underpin school development. Members of the governing body have made sure they are well equipped to challenge the impact of decisions made. Reference to minutes of governors' meetings shows increasing analysis of how financial decisions have affected the quality of teaching and how well pupils achieve. For example, once it was identified that outdoor provision for Reception was inadequate, finance was successfully petitioned and plans have been drawn up. Seeing this through will be crucial to improvements to the quality of learning. Staff have been drawn into school management as subject and phase leaders and good leadership has made expectations very clear with regard to responsibilities. This has resulted in much better job satisfaction and strong teamwork as well as pupils' rising standards. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning, coupled with honest and constructive criticism, continues to help staff improve their own performance.

Leaders are successful in promoting spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Provision is good and is central to pupils' good personal development. There are many examples of how the school is an integral part of village life and how relationships with parents and carers benefit pupils' learning, for example through homework and volunteer work in school. Curriculum development is well underway, focusing not only on full coverage, but how work is to be tailored to pupils' needs, to extend those who are potentially high attainers and to ensure all pupils have equality of opportunity. Currently such provision is satisfactory. To date improvements have proved more effective for older pupils but this, together with physical improvements to the fabric of the school, provides good models on which to build. The way in which change is being successfully orchestrated is a good example of the school's capacity to improve further. This is underwritten by good leadership and management.

Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements, are rigorously applied and are effective in keeping pupils safe. The school demonstrates, and pupils fully understand, that discrimination of any kind is not to be tolerated.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



31 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Chiddingly Primary School, Lewes BN8 6HN**

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when I inspected your school. As some of you know this was my fifth visit to Chiddingly. It has been a pleasure to watch the school improve since it was found to be in need of what adults call 'special measures' in 2010. I am pleased to say that it now provides you with a satisfactory, and fast improving, standard of education.

Here are some of the school's highlights.

- Children in Reception and Year 1 get off to a good start.
- You behave well in and out of class. Yours is a happy school!
- Big improvements to teaching are paying off, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6, so that by the time pupils leave they are doing as well as, and in some cases better than, those in other primary schools.
- Staff take good care of you and are helping you to grow up as caring, sensible young people.
- The school is well run. The headteacher, staff and governors make a good team. They know what works well and what has to be improved and are doing something about it.

The most important aspects to improve are:

- making sure that pupils in Year 2 do as well as those in most other primary schools in writing (especially for boys) and mathematics
- improving outdoor learning and play facilities for children in Reception.

You can be proud of how far the school has come in the last two years. You can play your part in making it even better by working hard. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Burghart  
Lead Inspector

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