

Woodingdean Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114480
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	395522
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2012
Lead inspector	Helen Howard

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	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Meeres
Headteacher	Gina Hutchins
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2006
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Helen Howard	Additional inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional inspector
Carol Worthington	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 26 lessons taught by 14 teachers. They met with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and various members of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including data about pupils' progress, self-evaluation and monitoring records. They also analysed questionnaire responses from 94 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Woodingdean Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school, with most pupils having White British backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is much higher than average. The majority of these have moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties. The school includes a small minority of pupils who have severe learning difficulties or disabilities who have much greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils.

The school meets the current government floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

A breakfast club and after-school clubs, managed by the governing body, run every day. The school has a number of awards, including Artsmark Gold and Sport England Activemark Gold.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because while teaching is mainly good or better, it is not consistently resulting in outstanding progress for pupils. Higher ability pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. In Reception, boys make slower progress in developing early writing skills than girls. Work in art and design is of high quality and is a notable strength of the school.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well, although higher ability pupils do not always make the progress they could, and boys in Reception make slower progress in writing. Children start school with skills and abilities that are slightly below expectations and by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is typically above average. In 2011, attainment dipped, especially in mathematics. However, pupils in the current Year 6 are once again performing at above the expected level.
- Teaching is good overall. Teaching in mathematics has improved as a result of a whole-school focus. The majority of teachers use assessment well to inform pupils about how well they are doing and what their next steps will be but this is not consistent across the school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, in breakfast and after-school clubs and around the school, and feel safe. They are polite and courteous, get on very well together and have positive attitudes to learning. Older pupils are beginning to take more responsibility through their roles as play leaders.
- The headteacher is supported well by the governing body and by her senior leaders and managers. Attendance, which was low, is now above average. Through effective performance management of teachers and focused leadership of teaching, leaders and managers have secured rapid improvements in achievement, following the dip in 2011. The curriculum provides good opportunities for art, music, drama and sporting activities.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - consistently providing a high level of challenge for higher ability pupils
 - ensuring that teachers consistently use assessment during lessons to inform pupils about how well they are doing and what the next steps in their learning will be.
- In Reception, raise attainment in writing by providing more opportunities for boys in particular to use their early writing skills in activities that they choose for themselves.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school with age-related skills and abilities that are just below expectations in most areas. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and reach close to expected levels in reading and mathematics by the time they reach Year 1. Staff develop language well in individual and whole-class activities and children become happy and confident learners. Attainment in writing remains below expected levels because boys' writing skills are less well developed.

Pupils make good progress and, over time, achieve above-average standards at the end of Year 6. Disabled pupils and those who have a statement of special educational needs make good progress in lessons because they are very well supported by planned activities that meet their needs and by skilled help from teaching assistants. The small minority of pupils who have the highest level of need make good progress as a result of individual focused support from specialist teaching assistants. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress because they are targeted for additional support in small groups throughout the school.

One parent wrote that 'lessons are fun and interesting'. Practical activities particularly motivate pupils. In mathematics lessons, the recently introduced range of equipment enables pupils to make accelerated progress. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where the quality of teaching was outstanding, pupils with different abilities used a variety of resources to support their calculation of multiplication problems, including counters, number lines and number squares. Consequently, they all made outstanding progress. Improving attainment in mathematics has been a focus for the school after the dip in attainment in 2011 and data show that standards are now above expected levels.

Pupils enjoy learning. Almost all pupils say that they learn a lot. As one Year 2 pupil said, 'I am doing well because I learn something different every lesson'. They make good progress in reading overall. Skills for reading in Reception are well developed and children enjoy phonics sessions (linking sounds to letters and combinations of letters) because the activities are imaginative. For example, friendly 'aliens', which landed in the Reception play area, had a variety of names such as 'Zig', that linked to

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the sounds children had been practising in lessons. As they move up through the school, pupils enjoy a wide variety of texts and these stimulate both reading and writing skills. School data and lesson observations show that attainment in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 is average and in Year 6 is above average.

Quality of teaching

In the majority of lessons, teaching is good or better. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use data well to inform planning and to identify individual support for pupils. They use targeted teaching time in lessons to help individual pupils close gaps in learning. The use of 'success checklists', which give pupils precise criteria for their work, together with good feedback from teachers during lessons, can be very effective in helping pupils to assess how well they are doing and in helping them to improve. However, these approaches are not used consistently across all lessons. In a minority of lessons, higher ability pupils are not always given sufficiently demanding work to do and consequently they do not always make the progress they could. In Reception classes, boys tend not to choose the writing tasks on offer during child-initiated activities and adults do not always encourage them to write. As a result, boys make slower progress in developing writing skills.

Teachers identify pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special education needs, who need additional help so that they can receive intensive support for literacy and numeracy. Teaching assistants, who deliver the individually tailored programmes, are skilful in adapting work and there is good evidence to show accelerated progress for these groups.

Teachers provide many opportunities for developing pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness, particularly through themed activities, personal and social education, music, sports and dance. For example, pupils explore Spanish culture through their language, dance and music. Teachers offer excellent opportunities for pupils to develop and appreciate artistic skills. In Reception, children are encouraged to paint using water colours and older pupils study artists such as Monet to produce their own work. Teachers give all pupils the opportunity to display a framed piece of artwork and this instils a sense of pride and confidence. The Artsmark Gold award has been received for the second time in recognition of the quality of provision in this subject.

Positive relationships are a striking feature of the school and teachers provide activities that help to encourage cooperation and sharing. In Reception, for example, children regularly play happily with visitors from a local special school and this, together with the school's highly inclusive policy, fosters an ethos of pupils' high levels of respect for others.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good and pupils are kept safe. Pupils are happy to come to school and this is reflected in their attendance, which has improved and is now above average.

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Almost all pupils feel that behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and most parents and carers agree. Pupils feel safe in school, understand how to avoid risks and have a good awareness of personal safety. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice. They say that on the rare occasion that bullying occurs, staff manage the situation very well. The school has recently introduced 'restorative' approaches to managing minor disputes, which encourage pupils to think about the impact of their behaviour on others, and they report that it is helping them to resolve arguments at an early stage. As a result, they are becoming less dependent on adults to manage their behaviour.

The school has a few pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or who are supported by school action plus because they have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and staff make good provision for them. With good support from outside agencies, pupils are given very precise targets for improving their behaviour which are closely monitored by teaching assistants. This, coupled with a system of rewards, helps pupils make good progress towards their goals.

Pupils have a strong sense of community, are proud of their school and enjoy positions of responsibility such as play leaders. They have very positive attitudes to learning and show an evident pride in their work and respond well to extra-curricular activities, breakfast and after-school clubs.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, supported well by an effective senior leadership team and the governing body, has provided the drive to improve standards over time. Her well-communicated vision and ambition for the school is shared by all staff. The school has excellent partnerships with external groups, including the local schools' 'Deans Partnership'. Teachers work together to share good practice and to check the accuracy of their assessments of pupils' progress. Additionally, collaboration between schools has led to improved focus on achievement by members of the governing body. Very effective links with Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club help to raise pupils' aspiration by providing pupils with strong role models.

Parents and carers are highly supportive, and almost all of those that returned the questionnaires say the school helps them to support their children's learning. There are very well established support networks for parents and carers, including an extensive range of courses and workshops. In addition, the school actively helps parents and carers to obtain work by offering placements for National Vocational Qualifications in childcare.

The broad and creative curriculum enables pupils to develop their skills across a range of subjects. It includes many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through a wide range of projects, trips and visits from specialists, including artists and authors. These provide rich and memorable experiences for pupils. After-school clubs enable pupils to widen their knowledge in

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specific areas. The breakfast club supports individual pupils well through a range of play activities and helps them to settle before school. Pupils enjoy participating in the many whole-school performances including singing, theatre, music and dance. They take part in a variety of sporting activities and regularly participate in competitions. The school's Sport England Activemark Gold award has reflected these good opportunities.

The governing body and school leaders provide clear strategic direction in maintaining the quality of teaching over time through effective performance management and focused professional development for teachers. Safeguarding procedures are effective and meet statutory requirements. School leaders have maintained above-average levels of attainment for a number of years. Following the dip in 2011, they took effective action to identify the reasons for this and to improve attainment, with a particular focus on mathematics. Attendance has also improved. This illustrates the school's capacity to improve further. Leaders accurately assess strengths and areas for development and take effective action to address gaps. Members of the governing body regularly visit the school to monitor the impact of its work. Leaders and managers are highly effective in promoting equal opportunity and they actively tackle discrimination so that all pupils are included in this safe and happy community.

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).

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.



27 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodingdean Primary School, Brighton and Hove BN2 6BB

You may remember that three of us came to inspect your school recently. Thank you for such a friendly welcome. Woodingdean Primary is a good school that helps you make good progress. You all told us how much you enjoy coming to school and we saw how good your attendance is.

You told us how much you like learning and that lessons are best when they are practical and fun. We agree, and we especially enjoyed seeing your art work. We loved the Reception children's 'Queen Elizabeth' portraits and the art club masks that were on display.

We thought that you behave well around school and in lessons. We saw that you get on very well with your teachers and that you enjoy working together and sharing ideas. Although teaching is good and you think that you learn a lot in lessons, we thought that some of you who find work easier could do more demanding work. We thought boys in Reception need more help to develop their writing skills when they choose their activities. We thought that you make the best progress when you know how well you are doing and know precisely how you can improve your work. We could see that the success checklists that some teachers use help you to do this but not all teachers use them yet.

We have asked the school to do these things to help you do even better:

- Make sure that in all lessons, some of you who find work easy have more challenging tasks.
- Make sure that all of you know how well you are doing and how you can improve your work.
- Help boys in Reception do even better in writing by giving them lots of opportunities to write when they choose activities.

You can help by continuing to try your hardest.

Yours sincerely

Helen Howard
Lead inspector

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