

Lancastrian Infants' School

Orchard Gardens, Chichester, PO19 1DG

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Through the determined leadership of the headteacher, the school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. Together with her senior leaders, she has successfully reversed the downward trend of achievement.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and achieve well by the end of Year 2. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates as a result of the good support they receive.
- The quality of teaching has improved, with most being good and an increasing amount that is outstanding.
- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.
- The school has a very positive ethos which is reflected in the good behaviour of pupils. They enjoy working and playing with those from other backgrounds, reflecting the school's good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school provides good support for the very few pupils who find some aspects of school difficult to manage and consequently their behaviour has improved. The rate of exclusions has fallen and most pupils attend school regularly and on time.
- School leaders and governors are ambitious. They have a successful track record of improving teaching and pupil achievement and have good capacity to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers consistently make enough use of assessment information to plan lessons that build on previous learning.
- In a few lessons, the learning activities are not planned well enough to meet pupils' different learning needs or lesson objectives do not focus on what pupils are to learn.
- Leaders have appropriate short-term goals for improvement but there is no plan in place to show how they are to address their vision in the longer term.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. She visited nine lessons or parts of lessons taught by five teachers, listened to pupils read and scrutinised their work. Some lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, pupils and a group of parents. The inspector also met with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Among the documents scrutinised were pupil assessment and tracking information, school development planning, minutes from meetings of the governing body and documentation relating to safeguarding pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 21 responses to the online Parent View survey to establish the views of parents and carers.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by school action is below average, although the proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is about average. Their needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication difficulties and behavioural and emotional difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is lower than usual.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes comprising pupils in Years 1 and 2. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.
- There is a breakfast club (Sunrise) and an after-school club (Sunset) which are managed by the governing body and were part of this inspection.
- There has been a significant change to the staff team since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - making better use of assessment information to plan lessons so that they build on previous learning
 - planning learning activities that are tailored to meet the individual needs of pupils
 - ensuring that lesson objectives focus on what pupils are to learn rather than what they are to do.
- Improve school development planning by staff and governors and produce a long-term strategic plan to show how the school is to further improve over the longer term.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school to reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 2. This is due to improvements in the quality of teaching so that pupils are motivated and keen to learn.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter school with skills that are similar to those expected for their age and they make good and occasionally outstanding progress in their development, with social development and mathematical development being particular strengths. Children get on well together and they concentrate on tasks and show resilience when learning something new.
- Pupils enjoy reading and they select books to find information and to read for pleasure. They have developed a variety of skills to help them to tackle new words. They are able to comment on the text and use clues to help them to guess what might happen next in a story. During the inspection, pupils enjoyed discussing what would happen to Max in the story '*Where the Wild Things Are*' by Maurice Sendak.
- Most lessons provide pupils with opportunities to practise their writing skills when learning about other subjects and this has enabled them to make good progress. By the end of Year 2, most write fluently and legibly to engage the interest of the reader. Their spelling is improving as a result of the new system to teach letters and sounds (phonics).
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and many say it is their favourite subject. Most make good progress and many work confidently with numbers beyond a hundred.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress at a similar rate to their classmates. This is because staff have introduced new systems to track pupils' progress and so can quickly identify those who need additional help. Skilled teaching assistants provide focused support for these pupils, often on a one-to-one basis.

The quality of teaching is good

- A carefully planned programme of professional development has paid dividends in improving the quality of teaching. Most teachers plan interesting activities to motivate and engage pupils and consequently pupils enjoy learning. Typically, teaching is lively and enthusiastic and there is an increasing emphasis on practical activities.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff have created a stimulating learning environment in which children can explore and investigate, both indoors and outside. Staff sensitively intervene with focused questions, which allow children to improve their knowledge and understanding. Staff are skilled at routinely assessing children and using this information to plan activities that are often exceptionally well matched to their developmental needs.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they make good use of probing questions to challenge and extend pupils' learning. Speaking and listening are a feature of most lessons and this allows pupils to discuss and share their ideas and so develop their learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils were using magnetic rods to 'fish' out numbers and they accidentally discovered properties of magnets they had not understood previously. Sensitive questioning by the teacher enabled them to understand that magnets attract only certain materials.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and all adults inspire pupils to learn. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to lessons by intervening with small groups and leading activities such as reading groups and small-group mathematics activities.
- Lessons are well planned with clear objectives. While this is consistent in most lessons, there are occasions when these objectives relate to what the pupils are to do rather than what they are to learn. Consequently, some pupils are unsure about the purpose of the lesson.

- Adults observe pupils' learning and record their observations in 'learning journals' in which pupils' progress is regularly recorded. This enables staff to obtain an understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do. Most teachers are skilled at using this information to plan lessons that build on this learning, but occasionally, not enough use is made of assessment information to plan lessons that build on previous learning and best meet the learning needs of individual pupils. The quality of teachers' marking has improved and pupils' work is marked regularly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Since joining the school, the deputy headteacher has introduced new systems to improve pupils' behaviour. These are implemented consistently by staff and consequently pupils' behaviour has improved. Pupils enjoy school and they attend regularly. In lessons, they typically behave well and they are keen to learn. Very occasionally, a few pupils will fidget and chat when parts of the lesson fail to engage them, but staff quickly address this.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly. They are polite, friendly and well mannered. They readily help each other by taking actions such as holding doors open for others. Pupils play well together, and incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Records kept by the school show few reported incidents of poor behaviour and the number of exclusions has reduced considerably.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage behave exceptionally well even when they are working and playing independently from adults. They share, take turns and work and play cooperatively when working in groups. They are sensible and have quickly settled into the routines established by staff.
- Pupils say they feel safe because adults look after them. They say they know how to stay safe from dangers outside school, including road safety. They understand about different forms of bullying such as name calling and prejudice-based bullying, but say that it does not happen. Very occasionally, pupils do fall out with each other but they say that adults are always on hand to resolve difficulties quickly. The inspector confirmed the views of parents, carers and staff who believe that the school keeps pupils safe and their behaviour is good.
- The good provision found in the Sunrise and Sunset clubs gives pupils a good start to the school day and provides a calm environment where pupils can play and work at the end of the school day.

The leadership and management are good

- Since joining the school two years ago, the headteacher has established a clear vision of high expectations that is shared by all staff and governors. School leaders are ambitious and determined to secure the highest possible education for all pupils. To this end, they have taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and to reverse the downward trend of underachievement.
- As a result of thorough self-evaluation, senior leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection. The actions for improvement in the current development plan are appropriate but as yet, there is no strategic plan to show what the school is striving to achieve in the longer term.
- Systems to manage the performance of staff are robust. There is a planned programme of classroom observation so that all staff have their work checked by senior leaders. Leaders have invested in a programme of professional development for all staff, which has led to an improvement in the quality of teaching.
- New systems to assess, record and track pupils' progress allow staff to quickly identify those pupils at risk of underachieving and to put into place actions to help them to overcome their difficulties. Consequently, the gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils are

rapidly reducing and this reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity. Discrimination is not tolerated.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and planned over a two-year period to accommodate mixed-age classes. Subjects are taught through a topic approach in which reading, writing and mathematics are central. Learning experiences are well organised to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The curriculum is enriched by a variety of activities that contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. All adults are carefully checked, and arrangements for protecting pupils are robust. The school works in close cooperation with outside agencies to ensure that support is available to meet the needs of pupils and their families if the need arises.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school. Although many are new to their role, they have undertaken training and development to develop their skills.
 - Recently, governors have undertaken a thorough review of all school policies to ensure that they meet their statutory responsibilities.
 - They manage resources, including the pupil premium, well to support pupils' achievement.
 - They work in close partnership with the headteacher and senior leaders and are increasing their role in holding leaders to account.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125822
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	402356

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	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Ewins
Headteacher	Amanda Harkey
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2010
Telephone number	01243 782818
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