

West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School

Hangleton Way, Hove, BN3 8BN

Inspection dates 5–6 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. She is relentless in her determination to provide the best learning and experiences for pupils and meet the particular needs of the school community.
- Together with the executive headteacher and senior leaders, they form a strong team, which is ambitious for the school and has been successful in improving the school since its previous inspection.
- Decisive and effective action has been taken to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, which are now good.
- Pupils achieve well because they make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils enjoy school, behave well and feel safe.
- Children in the early years make good progress because provision is well planned to help them develop and grow in confidence.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those in the autistic spectrum conditions unit, are well supported and make good progress because their needs are met very well.
- Pupils who are new to learning to speak English as an additional language are helped to quickly acquire skills, and are supported well in lessons by adults and pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to others and gaps are narrowing. In some cases, gaps between this group and other pupils have closed.
- Subject leaders make a valuable contribution to school improvement. Their roles have developed rapidly since the previous inspection.
- The effectiveness of the governing body has improved and governors now provide a good balance of support and challenge.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics is not as strong as it is in reading and writing.
- The key skills that the school has identified as priorities for its pupils, speaking and enquiry skills, are not always sufficiently developed in all subjects to promote rapid progress and a thirst for knowledge.
- On occasion, expectations and aspirations are not always high enough to consistently challenge some pupils to achieve as well as they might.
- Pupils do not always have time to respond to teachers' helpful comments on their work to help them improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, some of which were visited as joint observations with the headteacher or deputy. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work, looked at books and listened to some pupils read. They observed pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher of Hove Park School, and senior leaders and other staff with key leadership responsibilities. Discussions were held with pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including: the school’s own check on its performance and the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; information on pupils’ progress; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at the 75 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), three separate written responses, and spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took into account 67 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Lyons

Additional Inspector

Ann Pratt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The number of pupils on roll has dropped since the previous inspection.
- The numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school partway through their primary school education is higher than usual. This is due to a number of factors, including the lack of availability of school places in some areas of the city and some pupils who leave if places become available nearer their home.
- The school has a diverse ethnic population. Just over half the pupils are of White British heritage. A wide range of ethnic groups is represented in smaller proportions.
- At nearly one third of the school population, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The school has a specialist facility for pupils with autistic spectrum conditions, known as the ASC Unit ('the Unit' for short). There are currently 17 pupils in the Unit. They all have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils in the Unit are taught in two classes but also spend some time in the mainstream classes.
- At over two fifths, the proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Provision is made for the early years in a Nursery, where children attend for either mornings or afternoons on a part time basis or on a full time basis over the week, and two Reception classes which children attend full time.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- In September 2014, the acting headteacher was appointed as the substantive headteacher.
- The school has formed a partnership with Hove Park School whose headteacher is the executive headteacher of both schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by making sure that:
 - all teachers have the highest expectations and aspirations for what pupils can achieve, and provide tasks and activities that are consistently challenging for pupils of all abilities
 - pupils have time to respond to teachers' comments on how to improve.
- Raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - pupils' achievement in mathematics matches that in reading and writing
 - the key skills that the school has identified as priorities, speaking and enquiry skills, are developed in all subjects to promote rapid progress and engender a thirst for knowledge.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher, who is committed to ensuring that all pupils make the best possible progress during their time in school. She and the deputy headteacher have secured the confidence of the staff and morale is high. Governors and the rest of the senior leaders support them very effectively.
- With the executive headteacher, they form a strong team that has taken determined and effective action to improve the school. Since the previous inspection, inadequate teaching has been eradicated and pupils' achievement and behaviour have improved. This demonstrates the capacity for further improvement. There is no complacency and staff share the determination and ambition of the executive headteacher and headteacher.
- The very successful partnership with Hove Park School continues to provide mutually beneficial and innovative initiatives for pupils and staff. For example, the development of the role of subject leaders was an issue to improve in the previous inspection. All subject leaders have worked with a 'buddy' subject leader at Hove Park School and have successfully developed their roles in checking the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Rigorous checks are made to determine the school's strengths and weaknesses, the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. Where any weaknesses are identified, support is given and improvement is expected.
- The management of teachers' performance is closely linked to pupils' progress. Teachers only get pay rises when merited by sustained good performance. Good professional development is linked to whole-school improvement as well as meeting the needs of individual teachers.
- Additional funding for sport and the pupil premium is used effectively to benefit pupils' health and well-being and to successfully narrow or close gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others.
- The school is an inclusive and cohesive community. Pupils' differing abilities and backgrounds are equally valued. Relationships are good and pupils respect adults and each other. The school promotes equality of opportunity and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- The inclusion team makes a considerable contribution to supporting pupils and their families and helping to remove barriers to learning.
- The curriculum is stimulating and well balanced, and provides rich and varied experiences for pupils. There is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. It is enhanced through the partnership as pupils and staff have access to specialist staff and wider facilities. Leaders have correctly identified that as the curriculum is reviewed and developed, key skills of speaking and enquiry need to be embedded across all subjects to further develop pupils' thirst for knowledge.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values well through the curriculum and teaching. Pupils are valued as individuals but are also helped to see themselves as part of a diverse community with necessary codes of conduct for all.
- Parents are very supportive of all aspects of the school's work and express their confidence in the leadership and management of the school.
- The local authority provides good support and has helped the school to improve in a number of ways. For example, providing support to improve the provision in the early years, improving teaching and supporting the partnership. There is confidence in the school's leadership, its effectiveness and the capacity for continuing improvement.
- The safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements and are effectively implemented by all staff to keep pupils safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved strongly since the last inspection under the leadership of a new Chair. Governors have a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are well informed about all aspects of the school's work. They are committed and ambitious for the school's future, and have the skills and knowledge to ensure that the school continues to improve. They have a good awareness of how well the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally, and an accurate understanding of the progress of different groups within the school. Governors have a thorough understanding of performance management procedures and the quality of teaching. They have been involved in dealing with underperformance as well as rewarding good teaching. They challenge the headteacher and other leaders and hold the school to account effectively for its performance. Governors ensure that finances are managed well and meet the challenges of a reduced budget due to a falling roll. They have a very clear understanding of how the pupil premium funding is spent and how it is

helping to improve achievement. The governing body ensures that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet all government requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in class, in the playground, and around the school. They have good attitudes to learning, which help them make good progress in lessons. They are polite and friendly, and happy to talk about their school and their work.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire said that they think behaviour is good.
- Pupils treat each other and adults with respect and courtesy, and conduct themselves well when working with teachers or other adults.
- Very often, pupils' behaviour is outstanding. However, on a few occasions, a small number of pupils can become distracted and lose their focus on learning when they are not fully engaged in lessons.
- Some pupils with specific behavioural, emotional and social needs, who may find it difficult to manage their own behaviour appropriately, are supported very well by staff who ensure that learning is not disrupted for them or their classmates.
- School records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour have reduced over time, as have the number of fixed-term exclusions.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- New pupils are quickly welcomed and helped to settle in. One pupil who has been at the school since the Nursery said that, 'We always make them (new children) feel welcome because this is a very happy school.'
- The breakfast club provides a safe and healthy start to the school day.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school keeps their children safe and that they are well looked after.
- Pupils say they are not aware of any bullying. They are very confident, however, that if any issue should arise, teachers would listen to them and deal with it quickly.
- Pupils are aware that bullying can take different forms including name-calling and cyber-bullying.
- They know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations in and out of school, including keeping safe on the internet and when using mobile phones.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good, and is leading to improved achievement as pupils make more rapid progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. They plan carefully and effectively to meet their pupils' needs and deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Lessons are well planned. Teachers mostly have high expectations of their pupils, making sure that tasks are interesting and are pitched at the right level of difficulty so that all pupils make at least good progress. On occasion, however, expectations and aspirations are not high enough, and the demands made on pupils are not sufficient to promote the even more rapid progress of which they may be capable.
- Good relationships and mutual respect between staff and pupils mean that pupils enjoy learning, work hard, and want to do well.
- Pupils are especially motivated by the use of ipads that help to tailor learning to specific individual needs to ensure good progress.
- There are some excellent examples of marking and feedback that give pupils clear and useful pointers about how to improve their work. Pupils are also successfully encouraged to reflect upon and evaluate their own progress and learning, and that of others. However, sometimes, pupils are not given the time to respond and benefit from teachers' comments, so improvements are not always made.
- The teaching of reading and writing has been more successful than teaching in mathematics in the past,

as there has been a greater focus in these subjects. Mathematics has more recently developed a higher profile in the school, and the renewed emphasis is leading to clear improvement.

- Teaching assistants provide skilled additional support and make a good contribution to pupils' learning, especially for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They provide valuable assistance to pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language, as well as supporting other groups in class lessons.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement is good because, from their different starting points, pupils make good progress during their time in school.
- The published results for 2014 indicate that standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, when the published data are put into perspective, pupils' achievement is better than indicated because a much-higher-than-average proportion of pupils leave or join the school other than at the usual starting times. This skewed the attainment results by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, suggesting that pupils did not achieve as well as they did.
- The school's own careful checks, and the work the inspectors saw in pupils' books, show that over their time in school, and contrary to what is indicated in the published data, pupils make good, and sometimes better, progress. Pupils who have been in school the longest generally make the most rapid progress.
- Achievement in reading and writing is stronger than in mathematics because pupils make more rapid progress in these subjects, due to them having been a particular focus for the school.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in reading and writing improved in 2014 from the previous year. This demonstrates the school's high expectations for the most-able pupils, and the good, and sometimes outstanding, progress they make, as the starting point for these pupils was average or below.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the required level in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) check was above the national figure. This was an improvement from the previous two years when it was below.
- Reading for enjoyment is promoted well across the school. Many pupils read with fluency, expression and understanding. They have a good knowledge of a range of authors and can express their personal likes and dislikes, giving reasons for their viewpoints.
- Work is presented well. Pupils take a pride in their work.
- In the 2014 tests, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils by the end of Year 6 was over eight months behind other pupils nationally in mathematics and around eight months behind in reading and writing. Compared to their classmates, disadvantaged pupils were four months behind in mathematics, eight months ahead in reading and equal to others in writing. The school's most recent assessments show that disadvantaged pupils across the school are making good progress, gaps are narrowing and, in some cases, have reversed.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in the mainstream classes are met well, and so they make similar good progress to their peers.
- Pupils attending the Unit achieve well from their starting points. Staff know the pupils well and provide appropriate activities that meet their needs well and ensure that they make good progress.
- All groups, including pupils of White British heritage, those who speak English as an additional language, and those pupils who join the school at different times of the year during the key stages, achieve well.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start in the Nursery or Reception classes with skills and knowledge below that which are typical for their ages. A close check is kept on their learning, they make good progress, and are ready to continue their learning in Year 1.
- In 2014, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year improved considerably from the previous year, although it remains below average.
- Adults understand children's individual needs well. They encourage them to develop curious, inquiring

minds. The children enjoy good, trusting relationships with adults, and become confident to ask questions and take considered risks in their learning and play. They learn to understand the consequences of their actions, and that it is important to follow the class routines and make good choices.

- Children get on well together and help each other out. For example, some of them were observed holding each other's lunch boxes while their friends washed their hands. Children who are new to learning English play well with others who help them by talking with them and naming items.
- Children enjoy learning, and they behave well. They learn how to keep themselves safe, both outdoors and inside the building, for example knowing that you do not run indoors.
- Teaching is good so that children learn rapidly. Teachers and well-trained teaching assistants work well together as a team and plan activities that meet the needs of all children. Regular checks on learning and progress identify children who might be at risk of falling behind, and effective extra support is provided at an early stage.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are good and have led to improvements in teaching over the past year.

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	114425
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	453749

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	346
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Jennings
Headteacher	Rachel Simmonds
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 February 2013
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