

Telscombe Cliffs Community Primary School

Telscombe Cliffs Way, Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven, East Sussex BN10 7DE

Inspection dates	6–7 July 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong leadership for the school. He and his team have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment substantially over the past two years.
- Leaders and governors continue to provide effective leadership for the school.
- Middle leaders play a more significant role in the school’s development than at the time of the previous inspection, further strengthening leadership.
- Pupils’ attainment has steadily improved at the end of both key stages since the previous inspection and matched national averages in 2015.
- Pupils have made better progress in reading, writing and mathematics in the past two years. They make rapid progress in a wide range of subjects, including history and art.
- The early years leader has introduced more depth and quality to children’s learning. As a result, children make faster progress during the Reception Year than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Pupils’ good behaviour contributes to the school’s calm, happy atmosphere. Pupils behave safely, sensibly and respectfully.
- Pupils talk confidently about their ideas and opinions. They listen with interest to differing points of view.
- Governors work closely and successfully with leaders to check and develop the school’s work. They are knowledgeable about how leaders support and improve the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Variations in the quality of mathematics teaching in key stage 2 mean that the most able pupils do not achieve their full potential in this subject.
- The proportions of persistently absent pupils are too high.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics so that they can secure the highest outcomes for the most able pupils at the end of key stage 2.
- Build on the good start leaders have made in improving pupils' attendance by working with parents of the small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly enough.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and governors have successfully raised standards at the end of both key stages since the previous inspection, so that pupils' attainment matched national averages in 2015. As a result, pupils are much better prepared for the next stage in their education by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher's determination to develop the school's work has been central in securing and sustaining improved outcomes since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher complement each other's skills and strengths very well. They work effectively with all members of staff, sharing their ambitions for the school. As a result, senior and middle leaders speak with one voice about the school's strengths and about the next steps in its development. Most parents who completed the online questionnaire feel the school is well led and managed.
- Senior leaders effectively identify and nurture potential leadership, spotting talent among teachers and developing their ability to lead others. Teachers say that training makes a valuable contribution to their professional development. They particularly appreciate opportunities to work alongside colleagues, so that they can share ideas and learn from each other.
- Middle leaders' roles have developed considerably over the past year. They play an increasingly successful role in the school's development in their own right. For example, they look at the quality of pupils' work to check that teaching is helping all to achieve well and offer advice to colleagues about how to teach subjects. Those who are new to their role have quickly established themselves with colleagues as knowledgeable, helpful and reliable.
- All members of staff behave warmly, politely and professionally towards each other and towards pupils. They have high expectations of themselves, as well as others, and provide strong role models for pupils to emulate.
- Leaders have developed a broad, stimulating curriculum which engages pupils and motivates them to learn and to do well. The school's focus on building skills contributes well to pupils' personal development.
- Pupils learn to think critically and to question the validity of evidence. For example, pupils of all ages respond to thought-provoking questions such as, 'Are wolves good or bad?' and 'Was Nelson Mandela a terrorist or a freedom fighter?' They develop the confidence to disagree with others, using evidence to support their point of view. Skills such as these contribute very strongly to pupils' progress in history as well as their personal well-being, preparing them very well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and teachers use events such as assemblies very well to promote and consider the school's values, which are consistent with British values. For example, pupils regularly reflect on the school's values, such as tolerance and resilience, and how they relate to their own personal experiences. Assemblies reflect the school's positive, inclusive community atmosphere.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding well to ensure disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress. Leaders have strengthened procedures for checking disadvantaged pupils' progress, so that they can react more swiftly when pupils need extra help. As a result, leaders have successfully narrowed the gaps between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and that of other pupils nationally.
- Primary school physical education and sport premium is used effectively to develop teachers' expertise in teaching physical education and to give pupils a wider range of sports. For example, dance specialists have worked with teachers to develop their expertise and leaders have established a consistent plan for teaching physical education throughout the school.
- The recently appointed family support and attendance officer has made a good start in improving attendance. For example, she has established positive relationships with staff and parents and increased checks on pupils' attendance. However, it is too soon for this to have had a full effect on improving all pupils' attitudes to school, particularly the small number of pupils who miss too much school.
- The local authority provides good-quality, effective support for the school. For example, local authority representatives have provided training for middle leaders to develop their role in school improvement.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body contributes effectively to the school's strategic development. Governors work productively alongside leaders to develop the school's work. For example, they participate in open and honest discussions with leaders and staff about future priorities for the school's development when drawing up the school's improvement plan. They share leaders' high expectations of pupils and all members of the school community.

- Governors have a good understanding of how well pupils achieve and how this compares with other schools nationally. They regularly join leaders and teachers to discuss pupils' learning, review what works well and identify more that can be done to support those pupils making slower progress.
- Governors' visits to the school give them a first-hand view of pupils' learning and behaviour. They routinely ask leaders searching questions about how well different groups achieve, including disadvantaged pupils. They know how leaders allocate funds, including pupil premium and primary school physical education and sport premium, and the difference funding makes to pupils' achievement and personal well-being.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure recruitment and suitability checks are completed and maintained and that safeguarding policies meet statutory requirements. Staff and governors are well qualified and knowledgeable about the potential risks to pupils, including those of extremism and radicalisation, and about what they should do if they are concerned. Leaders work constructively with parents, agencies and local authority personnel. Buildings and premises are well maintained during the current building work and staff and pupils are very clear about what to do when the fire alarm sounds. However, very recent changes in the layout of the school building mean that fire exit signs in the corridors do not always point to the nearest fire exit. Leaders recognise the importance of making sure that fire exit signs are continuously updated during the current building work and will address this as a matter of urgency.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Good-quality teaching secures pupils' rapid progress across in most subjects. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' understanding during lessons, taking account of how well pupils are learning and making changes to activities where needed.
- Consistent, effective teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) contributes to pupils' good progress in reading and writing. Teachers use rewards well to motivate pupils to read widely and often. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to think hard about the best words to use in their writing and in their speaking, rather than making do with mediocre vocabulary.
- Well-organised reading sessions give pupils the opportunity to read and discuss a wide range of reading material including challenging texts. For example, pupils in Year 2 explored unfamiliar terms such as being 'hard up', while reading a book about the Victorians.
- Teachers very successfully develop pupils' willingness and ability to express opinions and to use evidence to support their viewpoints. These skills support pupils' learning across the curriculum, helping them to become critical, enquiring learners.
- History teaching helps pupils to develop increasingly effective research skills. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils discussed whether art gives us a reliable impression of Boudicca's appearance, culminating in a lively debate.
- Teachers and teaching assistants plan effectively for pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities. They show pupils how to use resources, such as word banks and mathematics equipment, to support their learning. This helps pupils to become more confident about working without adult support and strengthens their willingness to persevere.
- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and usually give them stimulating, challenging work. However, some teachers are less confident about how to teach mathematics at a deeper level, particularly during key stage 2. As a result, the most able pupils do not always achieve their full potential in mathematics. Leaders have been quick to recognise this, supporting teachers with good-quality training so that the teaching of mathematics is improving.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils welcome visitors warmly and politely. Most are engaged, enthusiastic and keen learners.
- Pupils cooperate very well together. They talk confidently about their views and are willing to disagree with each other during debates and discussions in a polite and friendly way. For example, during the inspection pupils challenged each other in history lessons, using evidence to support their points of view. These positive attitudes and skills make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.

- Most pupils enjoy school and relish the challenge of completing demanding work. Pupils' comments, such as 'this is really tricky but I'm getting it', reflect their enjoyment of tackling more difficult tasks in lessons. Just a small number of pupils are more reluctant to participate during lessons. However, improvements in teaching are building pupils' interest and confidence across the school.
- Pupils feel safe and understand how to behave to ensure they are safe. For example, they know some of the steps they can take when using the internet to keep them safe. Pupils are clear about what they can do if they are upset or worried. They say there is always someone who will listen and sort out any concerns.
- Pupils say they have enjoyed participating in a wider range of sports in school over the past year, which has contributed to their health and to their attitudes to school.
- Most parents who completed the online questionnaire feel pupils are happy and safe in school. However, a few expressed concern about bullying. School records indicate that leaders take occasional incidents very seriously and follow them up swiftly and appropriately. Pupils say they have no concerns about their safety and feel that bullying is not an issue.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils behave well while playing and chatting during playtimes, when learning in lessons and when moving around the school.
- Pupils say they like school and feel teachers and other pupils are kind. They say that behaviour has improved and that adults respond quickly and fairly to the few pupils who misbehave.
- Those pupils who attend breakfast club enjoy catching up with their friends. They behave sensibly and enjoy a healthy breakfast together. The breakfast and after-school clubs are well organised.
- Most parents who completed the online questionnaire consider pupils to be well behaved.
- While most pupils attend well, a small number are absent from school too often. This hinders their learning and progress and frustrates leaders' efforts to improve overall attendance. Attendance was below the national average in 2015 and levels of persistent absenteeism were too high. The family support and attendance officer has established positive relationships with parents and rigorous procedures to check and support pupils' attendance. However, these improvements have been too recent to make a substantial difference to some pupils' attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Developments in teaching, learning and assessment have steadily improved pupils' outcomes over the last two years.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2015, pupils' attainment increased to average levels in all three subjects at the end of both key stages.
- Pupils read enthusiastically and with increasing fluency and expression. They listen with interest when their teachers and classmates read. They speak knowledgeably about books. Most pupils read regularly at home and enjoy using the good-quality books available in school.
- Pupils use phonics and other strategies well to help them to read unfamiliar words. The results of the Year 1 phonics check improved in 2015 to just above average levels.
- Pupils learn how to be responsible for the quality of their written work by checking and improving their writing. They have increasingly high expectations of their own work, as reflected in the good-quality writing in their books.
- Pupils regularly write for different purposes with increasing confidence. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in their use of language to achieve different effects. Pupils' work in all year groups indicates clear improvement in handwriting, spelling and the use of grammar.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve increasingly well across the school. Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes increased at the end of key stage 2 in 2015, so that the gaps in attainment between this group and other pupils nationally narrowed.
- A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities in year 2 last year led to a dip in attainment at the end of key stage 1. However, information about pupils' progress and the work in their books indicates that disadvantaged pupils make securely good progress from their differing starting points at both key stages.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities make at least good progress and some make substantial progress. The quality and appearance of pupils' work indicates the school's success in improving pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils in every year group work with increasing confidence in English and mathematics.

- The proportions of pupils attaining the higher levels at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics for several years. However, until quite recently an element of weak teaching in key stage 2 hindered pupils' learning, particularly for the most able. While more pupils attained the higher levels in all subjects at the end of Year 6 in 2015, the proportions were still too low in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils become skilful debaters by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils learn how to discuss ideas and points of view in a mature, balanced manner. For example, during the inspection pupils in Year 4 used a range of evidence and artefacts to debate whether chocolate was discovered by the Mayans or by Joseph Fry. These skills make a strong contribution to pupils' progress in history as well as helping them to develop enquiring approaches in a wider range of subjects.
- Improvements in teaching ensure the most able pupils make better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. They make good progress in reading and writing at both key stages. However, while pupils make rapid progress in mathematics during key stage 1, some variations in the quality of mathematics teaching during key stage 2 remain. As a result, some of the most able pupils do not achieve their full potential in this subject.

Early years provision

is good

- Children behave exceptionally well because they are happy, active and busy. They get on well together and speak with adults politely and respectfully. Children often concentrate and persevere in activities for extended periods of time because they are interested and want to do well.
- Adults nurture and encourage children's naturally enquiring nature by valuing what they have to say. For example, during the inspection children in the outdoor area delighted in watching a seagull walking across the roof above. An adult made good use of their curiosity, encouraging them to describe the bird's feet and the way it walked.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has steadily increased over the past three years and matched national averages in 2015. Leaders have successfully closed the gaps in achievement between boys and girls which existed at the time of the previous inspection so that boys and girls achieve equally well. All children are keen to learn and, by the end of the Reception Year, are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Leaders have secured substantial improvements in the fabric and use of the outdoor area during the past year, so that this is an inviting, exciting, safe and fun place for children to learn.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about how to plan learning to support children's differing needs and engage them in activities. They use good-quality resources imaginatively to capture children's interest so that they quickly become engrossed in activities.
- Good teamwork ensures all adults are clear about how to support and guide children's learning. Strong relationships contribute very well to the warm, positive atmosphere in the early years. Adults are alert to children's needs and to their personal well-being. They regularly praise children for their behaviour and achievements so that children feel valued and are keen to do well.
- Leaders give safeguarding arrangements a high priority. All areas are organised effectively so that children can play and learn safely. The outdoor areas are securely fenced. Leaders ensure equipment is clean and maintained to a high standard throughout.
- Adults find engaging ways to encourage children to practise and develop fundamental skills, so that children have fun while learning. For example, during the inspection children using magnetic fishing rods to hook seaside objects from the water were encouraged to use phonics knowledge to sound out words written on pebbles and find the corresponding object.
- Leaders have been particularly successful in making sure boys make better progress in reading and writing since the previous inspection. Boys and girls are equally positive about writing and make good progress because teachers plan a wide range of activities which appeal to children's interests. For example, during the inspection one boy happily shared his successful writing with an inspector, his lively, writing illustrating his enthusiasm for the subject: 'Parrots shout a lot ... If you get too close to a crab he will pinch you!'
- Children of all abilities develop good handwriting habits which contribute very well to their progress in writing. For example, they learn how to form letters correctly and begin to develop a cursive script so that they are well placed for the next stage in their learning. Children know what they need to work on to improve their writing, such as including finger spaces and capital letters.
- Adults have the same high expectations of all children, regardless of ability or background. The very small number of disadvantaged children make the same good progress as their classmates.

- The recently appointed early years leader has rapidly improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Effective teaching ensures children make good progress and learn well. The early years leader continues to work positively with teachers and teaching assistants to address the remaining small variations in teaching so that all children can achieve their very best. Most parents are very pleased with the way their children have settled into school.

School details

Unique reference number	114420
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10012278

This inspection 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	584
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Hill
Headteacher	Darren Vallier
Telephone number	01273 583 113
Website	www.telscombecliffsprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@staff.telscombecliffs.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is lower than that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school operates a breakfast club and an after-school club on the school premises, both of which were included in this inspection.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in 17 lessons or part-lessons, including three observed jointly with a senior leader.
- The inspection team held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, a local authority representative, teachers, members of staff, parents and pupils. A meeting also took place with the chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- The inspection team took account of the 133 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. In addition, inspectors considered the views expressed by parents who spoke with them informally during the school day. They also took account of the views expressed in 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including the improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and attendance, and safeguarding policies.
- The inspection team looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. They also listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reading.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Timothy Rome	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathon Shields	Ofsted Inspector

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