

# Moulsecoomb Primary School

The Highway, Moulsecoomb, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 4PA

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Instability with leadership and staffing has resulted in a slow rate of school improvement since the previous inspection. As a result, standards have declined.
- In the past, governors have not addressed key issues quickly enough. Furthermore, governors' efforts were hampered by difficulty recruiting a headteacher.
- Pupils' achievement is highly variable across the school. Too few, particularly in key stage 1, achieve the standards expected for their age.
- The overall quality of teaching is variable. Some teachers have not yet acted on leaders' good advice.
- Some middle-attaining pupils are not making sufficient progress because work is too easy. Some teachers do not set tasks which demand enough of these pupils.
- Attainment in Year 2 is not rising quickly enough. Too many pupils in the school are not well prepared for key stage 2.
- A minority of pupils are inattentive during lessons. These pupils are not yet sufficiently self-motivated to concentrate fully.
- The proportion of pupils persistently absent across the school is too high.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has brought significant capability to the school. Leaders' incisive actions are securing rapid improvement.
- Stronger teaching within the school is now ensuring that pupils make better progress, particularly in Year 6.
- Leadership of safeguarding is exemplary. Pupils are kept safe and say that adults resolve issues quickly. Parents agree that their children are well looked after.
- Effective use is made of pupil premium funding. Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress this year across the school.
- Leaders set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are cared for well. Fixed-term exclusions are reducing rapidly.
- Children benefit from a stimulating environment and skilled teaching in the Reception classes. Leaders' actions ensure that children attain well.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good and raise attainment by ensuring that:
  - teachers have high expectations and provide pupils, particularly the middle-ability pupils, with appropriately challenging work
  - teachers identify underachievement and provide appropriate and timely support so that pupils who have fallen behind can catch up, particularly in key stage 1
  - the most able children in the early years achieve well in mathematics.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by ensuring that:
  - pupils are self-disciplined, make a positive contribution to lessons, and work hard
  - attendance improves more rapidly, particularly for those who are persistently absent.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- This is a rapidly improving school. Leaders are ambitious for the school and truly believe that every pupil can succeed. They evaluate the impact of their work rigorously. Leaders' evaluations of the school's work are reliable and insightful and are used well to plan improvement actions. Consequently, teaching is improving rapidly and pupils are beginning to catch up.
- Leaders have high expectations, setting appropriate performance targets for teachers. Leaders guide teachers systematically. As a result, teachers receive helpful feedback which guides them to improve. Staff say they are inspired by opportunities to work with other schools or undertake professional qualifications, which motivates them to improve further. Leaders' actions are having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have successfully introduced new assessment procedures. As a result, everyone has a clear and accurate view of how well pupils are attaining and where pupils need to catch up.
- Leaders have successfully strengthened teachers' subject knowledge. This is beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards. For example, leaders ensure that teachers help pupils to set out their work and are clear on the steps needed to develop 'mastery'. Leaders check that pupils can explain how to work out calculations and apply their methods. Pupils say they aim high and are keen to improve their work because they know that 'It's important to get better.'
- Leaders use additional funding appropriately to address weaknesses in the progress of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in mathematics was too slow. Current Year 6 pupils are now making rapid progress in all subjects. This picture is similar for most disadvantaged pupils in the school.
- The special educational needs coordinator uses funding wisely to train staff and ensure that everyone who supports pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is clear about what these pupils need to achieve and by when. The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Leaders evaluate pupils' progress frequently, and communicate often with parents so that everyone is clear about how well pupils are progressing.
- Leaders' level of care for pupils is exemplary. The pastoral team has clear plans in place for pupils who find it hard to concentrate or follow the guidance of adults in school. These effective strategies ensure that fewer pupils are excluded than in the past. However, some pupils require further support in order to fully engage in learning activities.
- Leaders have fully implemented the national curriculum and monitor standards across subjects closely. In 2016, too few pupils met national expectations in Year 6 in science. Leaders acted quickly and invested wisely in training and new resources. The oldest pupils now demonstrate good scientific-enquiry skills. A recent visit to a science museum also provided a rich opportunity for pupils to write and apply taught skills in English.

- Visits and interesting activities to enrich the curriculum are used well to capture pupils' interests and improve their attendance. For example, the gardening club encourages pupils to enquire and raise questions. This was seen in practice where some pupils were sowing tomato seedlings and were inspired to learn about propagators. Such opportunities spark pupils' curiosity effectively. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the role of 'eco warriors' and how this makes them think about the effects of their actions on others.
- Leaders train staff well so that they are informed about pupils' needs and are able to build strong, caring relationships with them. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong and develop their social skills well. Adults help pupils to reflect wisely on the consequences of their actions if mistakes are made. Pupils make moral choices which help them to be better prepared to learn about fundamental British values in society, including respect. Assemblies, personal, social, health and economic education, and religious education also promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development well. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders' use of sport premium funding promotes healthy lifestyles effectively. For example, pupils are proud of reaching the quarter finals in a recent football league competition. They value the range of opportunities that leaders create for participation in competitions and clubs. Pupils are inspired by their coaches from Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club who are also improving teachers' confidence in teaching this aspect.
- Support from the local authority was hampered in the past by staffing mobility at all levels in the school. The new headteacher has put in place opportunities for regular training and has implemented policies swiftly to guide staff. The local authority has recently brought about some important changes to improve teachers' subject knowledge. Adults are now more confident in promoting pupils' understanding, particularly in mathematics. Staff appreciate this well-targeted support.
- Most parents who completed the online survey have an improving regard for the work of the school and are confident that new leaders are addressing their concerns. Some parents are worried about staff turnover in the past but say they have been listened to. They are now more positive about the way the school is moving forward.
- Leaders' monitoring confirms that the quality of teaching is variable. They have not yet ensured that all teachers apply the guidance they receive effectively. Work in books shows that some teachers do not use assessment information well enough to raise achievement of middle-attaining pupils. Work set is sometimes not demanding enough and pupils do not achieve the standards they are capable of.
- Overall attendance is improving. Leaders are taking reasonable steps to improve some pupils' poor attendance. However, the rate of persistent absence remains stubbornly above the national average. Work in books shows that some pupils still miss vital lessons and consequently fall behind their peers.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are now better informed about the school's performance. They compare pupils' achievements with those of others nationally. This has enabled them to raise their expectations of pupils' achievement and they are now less accepting of

explanations for underperformance than in the past.

- The governing body responded promptly and carefully to priorities set out in a recent external review to sharpen their own practice. For example, governors evaluate leaders' recommendations about teachers' performance more rigorously and have set demanding targets for the headteacher to drive improvement further. Governors have recently received effective support from the local authority to hone their skills. They are now more effective than previously when the slow recruitment of a headteacher hampered their efforts.
- Governors check their understanding of key issues by making visits to the school. This helps to focus on agreed priorities so that they identify weaknesses swiftly. As a result, governors are able to hold leaders increasingly to account. They are also improving the quality of their meetings, making checks on their own effectiveness.
- Governors analyse helpful information that leaders present so that they understand how well pupils are achieving. For example, they can explain the difference leaders' actions are making in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. They are justifiably confident that funding is used well for these pupils.
- Governors understand their statutory obligations and undertake their safeguarding duties meticulously.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that staff and governors are fully up to date about keeping children safe. Staff speak knowledgeably about the procedures to follow, and training ensures that everyone is alert to the signs which might indicate abuse or exploitation. Records kept are of a high quality and demonstrate the school's proactive approach to preventing harm.
- Leaders' work with external agencies is effective. The school is a safe environment. The pastoral team works tirelessly and with good effect to support families in need and those pupils with mental health needs. This work has supported improvement to the attendance of some of the school's most vulnerable pupils.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Over time, the quality of teaching and learning has not been good. Where teaching is less effective, teachers have gaps in their subject knowledge and have not yet embedded leaders' expectations well enough. Where teaching is weak, teachers do not provide pupils with opportunities to build stamina in writing and apply their knowledge of phonics. Consequently, too few pupils achieve the standards expected for their age.
- Some teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to set high enough expectations for pupils. Middle-ability pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in writing and mathematics. Some of these pupils do not improve their work as effectively or make as much progress as leaders expect.
- In Year 2, improving teaching is not yet helping pupils to catch up rapidly enough in

order to meet national expectations. Progress in the past for these pupils has been too slow. The school's performance information and pupils' workbooks confirm this.

- In those classes where subject knowledge is stronger in English, adults examine and break down the steps to success for pupils. Consequently, pupils work hard to reach their goals. Pupils talk about what they know already and how this will help them to learn new things. For example, Year 6 pupils refer back to effective technical features of their writing in order to compose new texts with confidence.
- Most teachers set tasks that capture pupils' interests and help them to apply their grammar and spelling skills accurately. For example in a Year 5 class, questions such as 'Why should daleks be allowed to live on earth?' captivate pupils' interest. Teachers' high-quality displays are used to prompt pupils to check their work with increasing precision. Pupils refer regularly to different types of sentence structures outlined for them. They say that they appreciate their classroom displays as they help them to understand what is expected.
- Most adults instruct pupils well in mathematics. More pupils now set out their work more clearly and confidently to check the accuracy of their methods to solve problems. Adults prompt them to reason well. Mathematical explanations are enriched by effective displays which help pupils to understand the steps from 'apprenticeship' to 'mastery'. Pupils say they are confident about knowing what they are aiming for, for example, when solving algebraic equations. Younger pupils benefit from using equipment to help them to visualise and calculate accurately, such as when solving multiplication problems in Year 1.
- Teachers support lower-attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. They spot pupils' misunderstandings quickly and help them to learn from these. Pupils are encouraged to try out new skills so that they gain confidence to have a go at something new. Parents of these pupils value this support.
- Teachers focus sharply on the needs of some groups of underachieving pupils well and monitor their progress intently. Adults use questioning skilfully to probe and deepen pupils' understanding, moving learning on rapidly. This helps pupils to catch up. Teachers appreciate reviewing pupils' progress regularly with leaders and the help they receive to make useful adjustments to plans.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. Teachers apply new assessment methods to keep a close eye on how well pupils are reading. Younger pupils blend sounds together, using expression appropriately, for example in exclaiming 'it's not fair!' and noting the use of a punctuation mark to add emphasis. Those that are struggling substitute words appropriately to retain the overall meaning and apply their developing early reading skills well.
- Teachers motivate older pupils well, including boys who have not wanted to read widely, so that they are driven to improve their reading skills. Pupils appreciate the new more engaging books and the improvements to the library, all of which captivate their interest. The most able pupils speak passionately about their books which they say provide 'cliff hangers' and 'hook' them in. Pupils enjoy opportunities to read to the youngest pupils, enabling them to rehearse their skills regularly and feel proud of their expertise. They say this makes them want to read more. Others are motivated by special events, such as 'book week' which broaden their reading choices.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders ensure that pupils learn regularly about how to keep safe. Pupils say they are confident to speak out if something is worrying them. Visitors, for example from the fire service, enrich pupils' skills by prompting them to consider hazards. Pupils also speak knowledgeably about online safety and what to report if they are concerned. Most parents who responded to the Parent View survey are confident that leaders keep pupils safe.
- Pupils are highly motivated by the opportunity to ride bicycles and to learn about road safety and bike maintenance. Pupils understand how to take greater responsibility for their own actions.
- Pupils are taught well about how to keep themselves healthy, for example when they weigh collective food waste. Pupils reflect on their actions during 'waste week' by collecting items to upcycle and by donating clothes. Pupils understand the importance of working cooperatively and helping others.
- Leaders are highly committed to improving pupils' welfare. As one parent commented about the school, 'The school also helps families in need of support or wanting to further their education or gain work experience.' For example, volunteers are proud of their work outdoors in the school grounds which is contributing to pupils wanting to come to school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Attendance is not yet good enough and this prevents some pupils from achieving well. Too many pupils are persistently absent or have been excluded from school in the past. Leaders have been resolute in addressing this but the impact of their work is too slow.
- A few pupils make too little effort and don't contribute as well as they could in some lessons. They are overly reliant on the skilful support of adults to guide them, and in some classes they do not always work hard enough. Leaders' recent actions to introduce learning characters to help pupils learn such as 'Have-a-go Horse' are not yet affecting all pupils' behaviour positively.
- The positive attitudes to learning of the youngest children are commendable. They behave well, including at breaktimes. Pupils are motivated by the school's strategies to promote the importance of eating healthily and getting enough sleep.
- Leaders set clear rules, agree appropriate behaviour plans and promote consistent messages about pupils' conduct. Teachers are guided well to adapt lessons for those that find it difficult to listen and take part. Fixed-term exclusions are reducing and the few pupils who remain at risk are supported well.
- Staff supervision at pupils' social times is effective. Adults work tirelessly to model the

standards of behaviour expected so that most pupils make the right choices. Pupils' conduct is improving as a result. Supervisors play actively with pupils at lunchtime and help pupils to negotiate any squabbles. Most pupils report that bullying happens rarely. When it does, they are confident that they can tell a teacher who will help sort it out.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been below the national figure for the past three years. In addition, in 2016, some groups, including middle-attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils, made less progress than other pupils nationally in these subjects.
- Current pupils' progress in Year 2 is hampered by frequent staff changes. It is too soon to see the impact of leaders' actions on raising pupils' attainment despite pupils' progress beginning to accelerate.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who met the national standard in phonics in 2016 was below that seen nationally. Current pupils, including the disadvantaged, are now making better progress in reading.
- In 2016, attainment at the end of Year 6 was below that seen nationally. Middle-attaining pupils, including those that were disadvantaged, did not achieve sufficiently well, particularly in mathematics.
- The progress of Year 6 pupils in 2016 was variable across subjects. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, made better progress in reading and writing than in mathematics. Boys, including those who were disadvantaged, did not make as much progress as other boys nationally. This pattern of inconsistent and variable progress is largely because teachers' expectations were not consistently high enough.
- This year, current pupils are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is improving. This good progress is replicated in science in Year 6, indicating how standards are improving across the broader curriculum. However, some variability persists.
- The most able achieve well by the time they leave school, particularly in writing. The picture is similar this year.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making more consistent and rapid progress. For example, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 are making faster progress than their classmates in writing and mathematics as a result of additional support provided through effective use of funding.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the detailed, thoughtful and supportive attention they receive. During lessons and when working with specialist staff, adults' careful questioning and assessment help to shape tasks so that pupils can succeed.



## Early years provision

Good

- In 2016, leaders rapidly improved children's outcomes in the early years and more quickly than in other parts of the school. From starting points that are below those typical for their age, children make very strong progress. In 2016, the proportion that met a good level of development was close to the national average. Most, but not all, of these children were well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders monitor adults' assessments of children's achievement well. This helps to guide teachers to build incisively on children's attainment at the end of the Nursery class. Children in the Reception classes quickly rise to the expectations set for them. Leaders involve parents well and more now contribute to children's records of achievement than in the past.
- Adults' expectations of the very youngest children are high. They use questioning well to stimulate discussions and check children's mathematical understanding so that children quickly build relevant vocabulary. For example, in the Nursery class an adult guided a child to count out dots on dice and match them accurately to numerals on a number track. This guidance encouraged the child to understand the concepts of 'more' and 'less' when they moved their counter in the game.
- Adults plan motivating experiences which improve children's listening and social skills. For example, the very youngest children were seen listening intently to an adult when they kneaded dough together. Children took turns well. Skilful questioning helped children to reflect on what else they might need, which prompted a spontaneous cry of 'flour' from one child.
- Phonics is taught well. Children have good opportunities to blend letter sounds together to read words and longer sentences so that they build their stamina to read fluently in the Reception classes. In 2016, reading outcomes improved rapidly.
- Adults have responded quickly to leaders' guidance to fully challenge the most able children. An inspector observed two boys engrossed in writing, spelling words accurately such as 'moon', 'spoon' and 'baboon' in sentences when applying their phonics skills. Pupils are motivated well because of the high expectations that all adults have of them. Children say they like achieving 'hard things', proudly wearing stickers to celebrate their perseverance.
- Older children in the Reception class behave well and manage risks safely. Adults provide good opportunities for children to cooperate and explore learning within an engaging environment. The children are therefore highly motivated to learn, for example when exploring simple forces as they push soap suds around the playground. This stimulates their curiosity to brush faster to explore what happens, for example by seeing how they can alter the direction of the flow.
- Parents know that their children achieve well as a result of recent improvements. As one parent commented, 'My children have come on leaps and bounds and I can see from my younger one's progress how the teaching has got even better.'
- Leaders have directed funding well to strengthen disadvantaged children's speaking skills so that they now make similar progress to their classmates. More of these children this year can explain and reason appropriately when working mathematically.

This improving picture is similar across other areas of learning.

- Leaders use effective action plans to drive improvement. Teachers now plan demanding opportunities so that more children are better prepared to exceed expectations in writing this year than in 2016. Leaders and teachers rightly recognise that more needs to be done in mathematics for the most able children.

## School details

Unique reference number	132028
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10024635

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marisol Smith
Headteacher	Adam Sutton
Telephone number	01273 605700
Website	<a href="http://www.moulsecoomb.brighton-hove.sch.uk">www.moulsecoomb.brighton-hove.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@moulsecoomb.brighton-hove.sch.uk">office@moulsecoomb.brighton-hove.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17–18 January 2013

## Information about this school

- Moulsecoomb is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school provides 15 hours per week free childcare and education for 3- to 4-year-olds. Pupils in Reception join the school full time.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than the national average.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2016. The chair of the governing body was elected in July 2016.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

- The school meets the government's floor standards for what pupils are expected to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. They conducted some short, focused visits to classrooms with senior leaders in each year group.
- Formal and informal discussions took place with senior leaders. Discussions were also held with a group of governors, and also with two representatives from the local authority.
- Documentation relating to the school's website and safeguarding, including the single central record, was scrutinised.
- The school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and progress were assessed.
- Pupils' work in different subjects, in particular science, was analysed.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, as well as before school and during break and lunchtimes, was observed by inspectors.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Year 1 and in Year 6 and talked to other pupils about their attitudes to reading.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 38 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents during the inspection. The views of staff were taken into account by talking with them.

## Inspection team

Susan Aspland, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Simon Yates	Ofsted Inspector
Krista Dawkins	Ofsted Inspector

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