



Patcham Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114373
LEA Brighton and Hove
Inspection number 279372
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector David Curtis RISP

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Type of school | Infant | School address | Highview Avenue South |
| School category | Community | | Brighton |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 7 | | East Sussex BN1 8WW |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01273 509766 |
| Number on roll | 317 | Fax number | 01273 50 24 65 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | |
| Date of previous inspection | 6 November 2000 | Headteacher | Mrs Mary Chambers |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This large infant school is situated to the north of Brighton. Most pupils live in owner-occupied housing. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below the national average. A small group of pupils speaks English as an additional language, although none are at the early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school is too modest in evaluating its own effectiveness as good. It is an outstanding school which provides outstanding value for money. At the heart of its success are the vision and drive of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They have created a team around them who are passionate and determined to build a successful school. Together, they have met their aim to achieve 'high standards in behaviour, social manners and academic achievement'.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. They start school with standards expected of three-year-olds. They make good progress and by the time they start Year 1, all have met the goals they are expected to achieve. A good number exceed these.

By the end of Year 2, standards are exceptionally high. Pupils make outstanding progress and their achievement is high. A significant strength is that pupils are most successful in using and applying literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good. Pupils love coming to school. They especially value their friends. Pupils work hard in lessons and show real enjoyment in their learning. Parents are very supportive of the school.

The school has made significant progress since the previous inspection, especially in raising standards from 'average' to exceptionally high. The school is driven forward by careful and detailed analysis of its own performance and the ability to act swiftly in identifying areas to improve. The school has a very strong capacity for further improvement. There are clear targets in the school's improvement plan to help to maintain its outstanding performance.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- meet the targets identified in its high-quality school improvement plan.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

From starting school in the nursery, pupils make outstanding progress. By the end of Year 2, standards are exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils meet the challenging targets set, and a high proportion achieve the higher levels in national tests in English and mathematics.

Evidence from displays of work in the school and from high-quality portfolios of pupils' work indicates that they achieve high standards in other subjects, including science, information and communication technology (ICT), art, geography and history. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make outstanding progress and achieve the levels expected for seven-year-olds in national tests. They receive high-quality support from teaching assistants.

The key factor in pupils reaching these high standards is the outstanding teaching of key skills in reading, writing and number. This begins in the nursery and continues throughout the school. As pupils move into Year 1 and 2, they make exceptional progress in using and applying their key skills in other subjects. The standard of writing, for example, in history is very high.

In the nursery and reception classes, children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Equally good progress is made in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school and love being there. This is reflected in very good levels of attendance. One parent said, 'My son runs about halfway to school each day because he loves it so much'. Pupils who left the school in July 2005 left with many happy memories, amongst which friendship, the swimming pool and 'Golden Time' stand out. One pupil wrote, 'I have so many friends I cannot draw them all'. Behaviour in the school is good. Pupils take great delight in learning.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show empathy with those who are less fortunate than themselves through the school's strong links with Zambia. This link plays an important part in developing pupils' awareness of other cultures. The impressive relationships and the importance pupils place on friendship show good social development.

Pupils develop a very healthy lifestyle. They take part daily in a ten-minute 'Fit Kids' programme in addition to regular physical education lessons. The site manager's involvement in keeping them fit is really valued by the pupils. Water is available at all times. Fruit is provided at morning break. Healthy options are provided in the meals at lunchtime. Impressive basic skills are a strong feature of pupils' economic well-being. Pupils make a strong contribution to the community, for example, by taking part in the Brighton Dance Festival.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. This is because of the high quality of teamwork and the planning of exciting activities that stimulate pupils' desire to learn. Staff respect and appreciate each other because everyone is making a valued and important contribution to learning. Teachers' quiet pride in their skills is conveyed to the pupils and is reflected in the quality and presentation of pupils' work.

Teachers have very good subject knowledge and a deep understanding that pupils learn best when they feel valued and secure. They know that providing a wide range of practical activities, combined with very high expectations of behaviour and work, is a recipe for success for pupils of all abilities. Teachers are skilled in challenging all pupils at their own level because lessons are based on detailed assessment and knowledge of individuals.

Lessons are lively and stimulating. This means that pupils respond positively and enjoy their work. Teachers take excellent advantage of outdoor areas to promote learning and a healthy lifestyle. They equip pupils well for life beyond Patcham because pupils gain basic skills that are a necessary part of much learning.

Grade: 1

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is a shining example of how to provide a wide range of stimulating and challenging activities for pupils of all abilities whilst maintaining very high standards in basic skills.

This is because of the school's determination to teach a well-planned curriculum, enriched by visits and visitors and enabling pupils to share in the life of the local community. Parents talk about their jobs, grandparents listen to reading and trips out encourage active learning and personal development. Out-of-school clubs provide fun and encourage healthy lifestyles. Pupils learn about the wider world and the need for fund raising as they write to pen pals in Zambia.

A significant factor in the promotion of high standards is the reinforcement of basic skills in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils record their views on the local area in geography, write 'garden stories' after studying the environment and develop speaking and listening skills during frequent role-play sessions. Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care for pupils. Well-established procedures are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure. Key staff are well trained to deal with matters relating to child protection, first aid or the administration of medicines. The school site is secure and very well maintained, providing an attractive and exciting environment where pupils can flourish in safety.

A trained counsellor employed through an 'Extended Schools' grant and a speech and language therapist, paid for by the school, help provide for the needs of individual pupils. Those who need additional learning support are identified early. The school works closely with parents to provide the most effective help for their children.

Detailed targets are set for all pupils. These are reviewed termly and contribute to high standards. These include targets for literacy, numeracy and personal, social and

health education (PSHE) and are shared with pupils according to their age and understanding.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher has built up a powerful team of dedicated teaching staff who share a common sense of purpose and a strong clarity of vision for the school. Her drive and determination to ensure that the school meets the needs of all pupils have resulted in significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils now consistently achieve very high standards in all subjects, but especially in mathematics and English. The headteacher is well supported by the governors, who have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There is no air of complacency. Instead, there is a relentless drive for further improvement. The high-quality planning for future developments reflects this.

The school's senior management team works very closely with the headteacher and is equally committed to school improvement. They have made an outstanding contribution to improving standards. Together with the headteacher, they promote a very high quality of care and education for all learners. This is very important in ensuring that all pupils make consistently very good progress.

The school is committed to making sure that each pupil achieves success. It places great emphasis on pupils enjoying learning and this makes a very strong contribution to their very good progress.

Very effective systems have been developed to assess how well pupils are achieving and teachers use this information effectively when planning work. The quality of lessons is regularly checked by the headteacher in order to ensure that pupils' needs are being fully met.

Grade: 1

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Inspection judgements

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 1 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 1 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 1 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 1 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 | NA |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 1 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14th October 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome on our recent visit. You are very lucky in being able to go to such a wonderful school. These are some of the excellent things that we really noticed:

your headteacher and teachers make you work hard and expect you to do your best

your reading, writing and mathematics are of a very high standard – those of you in Year 2 are doing much better than many seven-year-olds

we think that the work you do in all subjects is very good; we particularly liked your lovely pictures which are displayed around the school

you enjoy school and look forward to coming each day

you love having friends and know that you can always find one at the 'Friendship Stop' in the playground

you enjoy working with teaching assistants, parents and Mr Eke who help you in lessons and who give you fun things to do at lunchtime - and after school when you are in Year 2

you really care about the children you sponsor in the village in Zambia

you behave well in lessons and in the playground.

Your headteacher and teachers already know what they need to do in order to make your school even better. We have asked them to make sure that they work hard to carry out their plans for the next year.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis

Lead inspector