



St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Littlehampton

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126040
LEA West Sussex
Inspection number 282048
Inspection dates 7 June 2006 to 7 June 2006
Reporting inspector Alison Cartlidge AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Highdown Drive
School category	Voluntary aided		Littlehampton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		West Sussex BN17 6HL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01903 716039
Number on roll	134	Fax number	01903 722521
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ian Thornhill
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Adam Lenkiewicz

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come from diverse social backgrounds and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Most pupils are of white British heritage. About 8% of pupils speak English as an additional language and this is broadly average. There has been a high turnover of teachers in the last few years. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 to 6 were on an educational visit.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school does not provide a satisfactory education and pupils are not learning quickly enough. The headteacher, other members of the senior management team and governors understand that teaching and leadership and management are inadequate, and that this is why pupils are underachieving. Despite this, plans for school development are insufficiently precise to provide a clear agenda and bring about the necessary changes, and not enough has been done to improve provision. As a result, standards in English, mathematics and science have declined and are well below average. Pupils' progress is not monitored closely enough so that effective action can be taken to halt the decline in standards. Progress is especially slow in writing and mathematics and pupils' written work in science is too superficial.

Whilst teaching is frequently monitored and weaknesses are identified, not enough is done to support teachers so that they make the necessary improvements. In many lessons, teachers do not provide work that meets pupils' differing needs and this leads to slow progress and some inattentiveness. In some lessons, behaviour is not well managed and this slows the pace of learning even more.

Support and guidance for pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Members of staff are caring and enable most pupils to behave well, and to be healthy, safe and happy. However, attendance is below average because not enough is done to discourage families from taking term-time holidays. Despite recent changes in assessment procedures, academic support is unsatisfactory and insufficient to improve achievement. Pupils' weak basic skills do not prepare them well for the next stage in their education or for the world of work.

Provision for children in the Reception Year has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory. A relevant curriculum with a variety of interesting activities ensures that most children in the Reception class are happy at school and working within the levels expected for their age. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory, although it is not adapted well enough to meet the range of needs in each class. As a whole, the school's track record of improvement is weak and it does not provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science and improve pupils' achievement, taking swift and effective action when they do not make enough progress.
- Ensure that in all lessons the pace of learning is quick, that behaviour is managed consistently and that work builds on what pupils of differing abilities already know.

- Ensure that the school improvement plan has measurable targets that relate to pupils' progress, and make better use of monitoring information to improve teaching and learning.
- Improve attendance by taking firm action to discourage absences for holidays in term time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science and pupils' achievement is inadequate. Attainment on entry to the Reception Year is broadly average. These children make satisfactory progress and by the end of the year are working within the levels expected for their age. However, pupils do not make enough progress in Years 1 to 6. Test results have declined over the last few years. In 2005, the results were significantly below average overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Inspection findings indicate that standards are similar in the current Years 2 and 6 and too many pupils underachieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. Pupils' understanding of a range of cultures and faiths is good. For example, English pupils enjoy learning about the countries and customs of their Portuguese and Polish friends.

Attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory with most pupils enjoying school. However, a few pupils display inappropriate behaviour and, together with some inattentiveness, this slows the pace of learning in some lessons. Attendance is well below average, due to families taking term-time holidays. Recent steps to discourage this have shown a slight improvement over the past term but levels of attendance are still too low.

Pupils have a sound understanding of how to lead healthy lives and keep safe. The new school council takes satisfactory responsibility for developments such as the creation of more clubs. Pupils provide good support within the community, particularly through helping elderly and disabled people in the parish. However, their life-skills are limited because their literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The school has accurately identified where there are weaknesses, but teachers are not supported well enough to help them to improve quickly. Not enough use is made of assessment information to plan work that meets the differing needs of pupils and to meet challenging targets. In addition,

behaviour is not always managed well, and in some lessons the inattentiveness of a few pupils is allowed to slow the pace of learning. Teachers' expectations are not high enough, particularly in the levels of challenge for the more able pupils. Regular and informative marking is beginning to have an impact on the rate of learning in some year groups but pupils' progress is not consistent across the school. A good feature is the way that pupils record their own responses to marking. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Reception Year, where the teacher and teaching assistants support and praise children well but are sometimes slow to correct their mistakes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with recent changes creating more teaching time and more meaningful links between subjects. For example, there are good links between English and history in the topic on the Ancient Greeks. The school acknowledges the need to provide greater opportunities for creativity through subjects such as art and drama. However, there is still insufficient flexibility in provision to meet the full range of pupils' needs.

Interactive whiteboards are used regularly to introduce topics and to enhance learning. The provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and includes frequent clubs and visits. Visitors help to widen pupils' knowledge of creative activities and other cultures. The curriculum for the Reception Year is satisfactory although, as the school is aware, there are not enough opportunities for purposeful, independent play.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

The quality of care, guidance and support is inadequate. This is because academic support and guidance do not ensure that pupils achieve well enough from Year 1 to Year 6. Assessment information is not used well enough to plan work that meets pupils' differing needs or to monitor the pupils' progress. Pupils with learning difficulties are not always supported well enough and, as a result, their needs are not fully met and they make insufficient progress. A bilingual assistant is used well to improve the spoken English of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, although the progress of these pupils is inadequate in other subjects. There are good procedures for ensuring that Reception children settle into school happily and these children receive satisfactory support in their learning. Robust child protection and health and safety procedures are in place and are known to all adults. However, attendance is not monitored rigorously enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate. Whilst the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis, leaders and managers have not been successful in halting the decline in standards since the last inspection and these have remained well below average for

the last three years. Leaders and governors are committed to improving provision, but while there is renewed enthusiasm in monitoring standards and teaching and learning, this is not having sufficient impact.

Governors, the headteacher and other members of staff are aware of the school's weaknesses and know what needs to be improved but school development planning does not identify how the necessary changes are going to be made and what the likely impact on standards will be. The plan describes monitoring activities and how provision will be evaluated but does not have measurable targets for improvement.

The school welcomes pupils from all backgrounds and has satisfactory procedures for seeking the views of parents and pupils. Whilst many parents are happy with the school, they are right to express concern over pupils' progress.

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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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. We were pleased to find some good things at your school but we feel that it needs to improve so that you do even better. We have asked for the school to be given some extra help to put things right.

What we liked most about your school:

You are very polite and friendly.

Your teachers are kind and caring.

Your headteacher, members of staff and governors want to make the school better.

You do some good things to support the community.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Help you to learn more quickly in English, mathematics and science.
- Make sure that you are given work that is neither too hard nor too easy.
- Have clear plans showing how the school will be improved.
- Improve attendance, particularly by asking parents and carers not to take you on holiday in term time.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work. We wish you all well for the future.