

# Coldean Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114384
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brighton and Hove
<b>Inspection number</b>	289893
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Juliet Ward HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	304
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Leatherby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Burdsey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Selham Drive Coldean Brighton BN1 9EL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 294914
<b>Fax number</b>	01273 294916

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Nearly half the pupils in this larger-than-average school come from a large estate of social housing identified as one of the most deprived urban areas in the south east. A high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. A small number of pupils are learning English as an additional language. Pupil mobility varies from year to year, and is high in some year groups. Pupils enter the Nursery with levels of skills below those expected for their age. The school has the Activemark and Healthy Schools Silver award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a very effective and inclusive school with several outstanding features. Leadership and management of the school are good and the headteacher's leadership is outstanding. The governors are fully involved in all aspects of the school's work. The school's evaluation of its strengths and areas for development is accurate. The school has much improved since the previous inspection because of the rigour in keeping a check on the school's performance and incisive action led by the headteacher. Its track record in raising standards and improving the curriculum clearly show that there is good capacity to improve further. Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well and contributes to pupils' good personal, social and emotional development as well as their learning.

At the heart of the school's work is the belief that every child is important. Most children start in the Nursery with low levels of skills and knowledge and they thrive on the very good provision in the Foundation Stage. Achievement throughout the school is good. Standards are broadly average and improving, because leadership and management have clearly identified gaps in pupils' skills through their good use of assessment. As a result, the pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills have improved much. However, writing remains an area for further development, especially in encouraging the pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects.

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school places very strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development and all pupils feel valued. The level of support provided for parents is outstanding and encourages them to take an active part in their children's education in many ways, such as taking part in curriculum workshops. As one parent stated, 'My son has flourished throughout his time at the school and my daughter is enjoying every minute of Nursery.' Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and present good role models for them to follow. Pupils behave well, enjoy school and are eager to learn. This has a positive impact on the progress they make. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and they make a good contribution to the school and wider community.

The school provides an exciting, rich curriculum that contributes to pupils' high levels of enjoyment. Teachers plan tasks and activities that build on previous work and this enables pupils to make good progress. There are very good systems to track pupils' academic progress. Attendance remains below average due to a core of families allowing their children to miss too much time at school. This has an adverse effect on their learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, and particularly in writing, by giving pupils more opportunities to use and develop their literacy skills in other subjects.
- Improve the attendance for some pupils in order to raise their attainment.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Many pupils enter the school with below average levels of language and communication skills. In the past, this has hindered literacy development and other aspects of learning. Recent initiatives are clearly improving pupils' speech and reading skills. Children make particularly

good progress through the Foundation Stage and in Years 2, 4 and 5. Although standards in writing are rising, there is scope for further improvement.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are average and pupils' achievement is good. In 2004 and 2005, standards dipped in Years 2 and 6 but there was an improvement in 2006 when test results rose and were close to the national average. The school's very detailed tracking systems show that these pupils made good progress and about half exceeded their targets.

No groups underachieve. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as do the few pupils learning English as an additional language. Few pupils in Year 6 are working at levels that are in advance of those expected for their age but the impact of the school's initiatives and good teaching have raised the performance of pupils in other year groups. As a result, standards are rising consistently and the school is on target to meet its challenging targets.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils understand the guidelines on behaviour and value the rewards for their efforts. Their behaviour is good. Pupils participate eagerly in anti-bullying events and are clear about the importance of keeping safe. Pupils say they feel well looked after in school. Attendance remains below average but is steadily improving. Pupils appreciate the various rewards for good attendance, but some parents still do not ensure their children attend regularly.

Pupils are interested in their lessons and participate in the many extra sports and arts activities provided for them. These encourage fitness, cultural awareness and stimulate their enjoyment of school life. Through the acquisition of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the future. Some pupils are playground 'buddies', providing friendship and games activities in the playground. Others are ambassadors meeting visitors, and school councillors who have assisted in playground initiatives and setting up the Coldean Cafe which offers a breakfast club and a healthy food tuck shop. Pupils apply these good personal qualities in the school community and by helping in activities with senior citizens in the wider community. They have a good understanding of healthy eating, although the contents of some lunch boxes do not reflect their knowledge about healthy food. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They get along with one another very well and raise funds for those in need. The school's initiative to learn French enhances pupils' understanding of the wider world.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good, and sometimes outstanding teaching and learning are key factors in pupils' good progress. Relationships between teaching staff and pupils are strong and help to keep pupils well motivated and focused. Teachers know pupils well, have high expectations of them, and plan work that successfully meets the needs of all. Teachers' lesson plans are detailed and underpinned by their secure command of subjects taught. Learning objectives are explained clearly at the start and lessons proceed at a lively pace. Throughout the Foundation Stage, much learning is gained through play. Very good, and sometimes outstanding teaching ensures pupils, many of whom have very limited speaking skills, learn effectively through a range of enjoyable practical activities and investigations. As such, they make good progress in all required areas of learning.

In almost all lessons, teachers make learning interesting. In outstanding literacy and numeracy lessons in Years 4 and 5, the teachers used a wide range of strategies to involve and engage the pupils in their learning, including paired and group working, drama and short, well focused tasks. Stimulating use of interactive whiteboards was observed in several lessons. Teaching assistants work in close co-operation with teachers and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school makes very effective use of a wide range of assessment information to monitor and track pupil progress, help plan what is to be taught next, and set targets for learning. Most but not all pupils know their own targets and can talk about their progress; one pupil explained that he had 'progressed through three sub-levels in maths in one year'. As a result of the school's good practice, pupils are enthusiastic learners who achieve well. However, some pupils' writing is not as good as it could be because teachers sometimes miss opportunities for pupils to use and apply their literacy skills.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Extra-curricular provision is very strong. There is a wide range of visits, activities and clubs on offer, and the school stages several drama performances which involve many pupils. Parents speak very highly of these high quality events which they thoroughly enjoy attending. The school has made very good progress in introducing French throughout the school and linking it effectively to all aspects of oracy. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils and this reflects the school's determination to provide rich, enjoyable and meaningful opportunities for pupils, such as the residential visit to France and taking part in local festivals of sport and dance. The school makes good, specific provision to help pupils with particular needs, including those higher attaining pupils. For example, groups of pupils have worked with others in the locality on projects such as 'Sound-making' and 'Circus Sports', and have performed dance at the Brighton Dome Festival.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils say that there is always someone to talk to if they have any concerns or problems. Systems to support bilingual pupils, those new to the school, and those who struggle with learning are good and very well managed. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school. There are excellent systems to track pupils' progress in literacy and mathematics, and the school provides additional support where needed. Individual pupils' targets are set and shared with pupils. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to improve. The school fully meets requirements for health and safety, including regular risk assessments. Child protection arrangements are good and the level of support the school provides for parents and carers is outstanding. One parent wrote, 'Support services are excellent and the toddler group has been invaluable to both of us.' Vulnerable pupils are cared for very well and the school works closely and effectively with other agencies.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and fosters a very good level of teamwork amongst all staff. Rigorous assessment of pupils' achievement has been used successfully to set challenging targets for improvement. These have been followed through by leaders at all

levels so that every area of the school's performance is at least good and some features are excellent.

The school evaluates its performance accurately, and high standards of teaching, learning and care are expected. Parents' and pupils' views are regularly sought. A close check is kept on the work in lessons, and areas for improvement are identified and dealt with. Work to raise standards in literacy and mathematics has ensured that achievement is good. The school had rightly identified target setting and writing as areas that require further work. Governors make a good contribution to the development of the school and play an active role in the school's self-evaluation. Resources are deployed very well. The headteacher's systematic approach to all aspects of management has provided a very strong foundation for further improvement.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

17 May 2007

Dear Girls and Boys

Inspection of Coldean Primary School, Selham Drive, Coldean, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 9EL

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to let you know what we think about your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection by talking to us about your work, your life in school and all you do.

- We think your school is a good school with some things that are really outstanding.
- The headteacher and your teachers make sure all their decisions make school life and your learning better for you all the time. You, through the school council, play an important part in improving the school and your ideas are acted upon.
- You really enjoy coming to school and you achieve well, particularly because your teachers make the lessons lively and use lots of interesting resources such as interactive whiteboards.
- Another reason for your good achievements is that you are cared for very well, and your teachers and support staff all make sure they help you when you have problems with some of your work or any other worries.
- You behave in a very sensible and mature way around the school and in lessons.
- The overwhelming majority of you and your parents are very happy with the school and all it offers. Many of you take part in the outstanding range of extra activities.

We had a very enjoyable time at your school. We think that to make learning even better, all of you need to make sure you come to school every day. Perhaps some of you need to make sure your mums and dads are good at making sure you come to school regularly too. We have asked your teachers to continue to help you to improve your literacy work, and especially your writing.

With best wishes

Juliet Ward Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools