



Peter Gladwin Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114443
Local Authority Brighton and Hove
Inspection number 289915
Inspection dates 7–8 February 2007
Reporting inspector Eileen Chadwick

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Drove Road
School category	Community		Portslade
Age range of pupils	4–11		Brighton BN41 2PA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01273 294959
Number on roll (school)	196	Fax number	01273 294956
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Nigel James
		Headteacher	Catherine Keith
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves a mixed area on the outskirts of Brighton. The proportions of pupils receiving free school meals and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are above average. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is below average because when children start school a significant minority have limited language and social skills. Since the school was last inspected, there have been several changes of headteacher. The current headteacher took up post just over one year ago.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with strengths. It is improving, with a warm and friendly atmosphere in which pupils behave well. Pupils receive good care, support and guidance and this promotes their good personal development and well-being. Good leadership by the headteacher, in teamwork with all staff, has helped the school to recover from an unsettled period. There is now a clear direction for improvement. Positive comments from parents and pupils demonstrate a confidence in the work of the school.

Senior leaders have set about improving the standard of teaching and the curriculum. Changes are having a good impact on pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6. School leaders have started to tackle the need to improve provision in Reception and Years 1 and 2 with the result that pupils' achievement is now more consistent across the school than previously. They are fully aware that there is still more work to do in this area.

The quality of teaching and pupils' progress are satisfactory in Reception and Years 1 and 2. However, standards in reading, writing and mathematics in these years are below average. Learning activities are practical and interesting but there is not enough attention given to the direct teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good. This helps pupils to start catching up from a legacy of low standards. By Year 6, standards are average in mathematics and science but below average in English, despite the good progress now being made in both reading and writing. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their lessons because they are made relevant to their interests. Assessment systems are now good due to rapid improvements within the last year. However, in Reception and Years 1 and 2, work is sometimes too hard for pupils who struggle to keep pace, or too easy for more capable pupils. Systems for hearing pupils read are satisfactory in Reception and Years 1 and 2 but teaching is often not rigorous enough to raise standards to where they should be in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is good. It is innovative and exciting and enriched by a very good range of outside visits and clubs. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes across the curriculum. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support writing and other aspects of the curriculum. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, brought about by effective and sensitive care and support. Pupils feel very safe and understand how to keep healthy.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides innovative leadership and is the driving force for school improvement. However, the roles of subject leaders in checking their colleagues' work and monitoring the impact of initiatives on raising standards are insufficiently developed. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory mainly due to accelerated progress since the current headteacher's arrival. The school has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Reception and in Years 1 and 2, by making teaching more rigorous.

- Use the assessments made of pupils' progress more effectively in Reception and Years 1 and 2 to ensure pupils' work is never too hard or easy.
- Sharpen the roles of subject leaders in checking teaching and learning so as to increase the rate of improvement in quality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Their attainment on entry is below average. By Year 6, they reach average standards in mathematics and science but standards in English are below average.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2. However, by the end of Reception standards are below those expected for this age group. They remain below average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are enthusiastic about reading and by Year 2 write neatly for a range of purposes. However, a significant minority have weak word-building skills and do not recognise enough common words. Weaker spelling limits writing standards, including for the potentially more capable pupils. Provision for reading and writing has been strengthened this year but there is not enough attention to teaching key skills during literacy lessons. In mathematics, fewer Year 2 pupils reach higher levels than do so nationally.

In Year 2, standards have varied too much from year to year and, too often, pupils have entered Year 3 with weak literacy and numeracy skills. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' good progress in English, mathematics and science is driving up standards; inspection shows an improvement in mathematics standards compared with the below average standards reached by pupils in the 2006 national tests. In English many pupils read and write fluently for different purposes. Their imaginative writing is often impressive. However, their weaker start in reading and writing is still limiting the standards being reached in English, especially for boys.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Their progress sometimes slows in Years 1 and 2 when the steps in learning phonics and reading are too hard. Progress for these pupils is good in Years 3 to 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their school and are proud of it. They display good manners in class and around school. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are very good, strongly promoting pupils' confidence and sense of well-being. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual development very well, for example when they reflect on the beauty of the seashore and express their own ideas through art and writing. Behaviour is good and pupils settle well to their lessons. However, their concentration occasionally wanders when their work is too easy or too hard. Pupils feel safe, free from prejudice and say that any bullying is dealt with fairly and quickly. The good range of sporting

activities and strong promotion of healthy lifestyles stimulate their understanding of the need to make good choices. Pupils' contributions to the school and wider community are good. Most pupils attend regularly. Attendance levels have improved and are now average. However, despite the school's rigorous procedures, a minority of pupils do not attend as well as might be reasonably expected. Preparation for pupils' future education and working lives is satisfactory but standards in English are currently a limiting factor.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Throughout the school, teachers manage their pupils well and bring learning alive through practical activity. They give pupils good opportunities to develop their vocabulary, speaking and thinking skills. Teachers use ICT resources well to facilitate learning. Teaching is most successful in Years 3 to 6 where good planning ensures lessons build well on the skills pupils have previously learned. Teachers in these years have high expectations, manage time effectively and make sure their pupils work hard. However, in the classes of younger pupils there is not always enough teaching of direct skills and tasks are not so well matched to pupils' different learning needs. This can cause lower attaining pupils' progress to slow when reading tasks are too hard. Occasionally, more capable pupils mark time when they repeat too much of their earlier learning. In Reception there is not enough focus on adult-led tasks and intervention to take the learning forward during play.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad, exciting and creative curriculum. It has improved rapidly in the last year. It is innovative in the way links between subjects enable pupils to use skills learned in one subject to enhance learning in another. This is excellent for writing. Practical subjects, for example art and design, science and dance, are used to broaden pupils' experiences and provide real reasons for reading and writing. Systems for teaching reading and writing have been much improved in the last year. These are having a good impact on raising achievement in Years 3 to 6. Although systems for hearing pupils read in Reception and Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory they are not sufficiently rigorous to raise attainment from a low base. The use of the local environment, visits, links with other schools and out of school clubs provide very good enrichment for pupils' learning. Sport is well provided for. Provision for ICT and science is good and has improved since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff look after pupils very well and promote high quality, caring relationships. Pupils are sure they have adults to turn to should any problems arise. Procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are rigorous. Support is good for pupils with physical disabilities and for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school works particularly closely with outside agencies to meet pupils' specific needs. The successful efforts of all staff to promote good behaviour have a positive impact on the ethos of the school. Academic guidance is generally good. It is rigorous and systematic and has improved substantially this year. However, assessments are not always used to make sure pupils' work is matched to their needs. Setting targets for individual pupils is now in place, although sometimes pupils themselves do not know what they have to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has brought vision and co-ordination to the work of the school. She has secured a strong school ethos with an emphasis on improving standards and achievement. When she took up post just five terms ago she quickly established the critical areas for improvement and an accurate evaluation of the school's performance has resulted in clear priorities being set.

The headteacher has successfully shared her clear sense of direction with staff. In the last year, much hard work has been put into improving the quality of the curriculum and systems for teaching reading and writing. Improved methods for checking teaching and monitoring pupils' progress have already led to improvements in pupils' achievement in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.

School leaders rigorously monitor teaching and standards and set ambitious targets for pupils' achievement. Subject leaders are being trained to carry out their roles but do not yet monitor teaching and learning. This is preventing weaknesses from being identified quickly enough and standards rising more consistently across the school. The current school development plan is satisfactory but does not show enough detail about how initiatives will be evaluated for their impact on raising standards.

Governors have a satisfactory impact on school improvement. They are supportive and, since the last year, have begun to take an appropriate role in evaluating and challenging the school's work. The budget is very tight and there was a deficit when the headteacher arrived. The local authority has cleared the deficit and there is satisfactory financial planning for the future.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking with you. The school gives you a satisfactory education and there are some good things about your school.

- You make good progress in Years 3 to 6 in reading, writing, mathematics and science because you are taught well.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on really well with each other.
- You have some exciting opportunities for writing and for learning through visits, visitors and clubs.
- Teachers make sure you are cared for well and you are kept safe.
- Your headteacher leads you all well and your teachers are working hard to make the school better.

Here are the things we are asking the school to change:

- Improve your progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Make sure your work is never too easy or hard.
- Give those teachers in charge of subjects better opportunities to check your progress in lessons. You can help your teachers by making sure you work hard at improving your reading, spelling, punctuation and mathematics.

Thank you again for your help and for being so friendly.