



# Saltdean Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114479  
**Local Authority** Brighton and Hove  
**Inspection number** 289929  
**Inspection date** 9 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** David Collard

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Chiltington Way
<b>School category</b>	Community		Saltdean
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Brighton BN2 8HB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 303358
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	421	<b>Fax number</b>	01273 309206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	John Davies
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Goodman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 February 2003		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 9 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 289929
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Saltdean is a larger than average primary school serving the local coastal area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to that in most other schools. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, although the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is low. There have been some significant changes within the senior leadership team over the last year.

## **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 an effective and strong commitment to ensuring pupils are independent and well prepared for their future life. Consequently, personal development is good. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'This is my second home and, though I am looking forward to moving on, I do not want to leave.' Clearly, pupils are proud of their school, they are taught well and genuinely want others to share in this success.

Pupils make satisfactory academic progress from their entry in the Reception Year to leaving in Year 6. In the past, there have been dips in performance, particularly in Years 1 and 2, which have affected pupils' longer-term progress. The good leadership has focused on eliminating these weaker elements, particularly in teaching. It has resulted in key changes being made that are now making pupils' progress more even. For example, the new assessment co-ordinator, appointed to strengthen the processes for analysing the trends in pupils' academic performance, is ensuring support is targeted more effectively and making teachers more accountable for the performance of their classes. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, as do those in the Foundation Stage, where the quality of provision is good.

The care, welfare and support of pupils are satisfactory overall. Whilst pastoral care is good, the systems for academic guidance are not yet effective enough in identifying those pupils who have the potential to reach higher standards. Pupils enter the school with standards at or slightly below those expected for their age. By the end of the Foundation Stage and Year 2, they are achieving as well as would be expected. In Year 6, standards overall are at those expected for their age. Although a higher proportion of pupils than average achieve the expected Level 4 in national tests, fewer than average gain the higher Level 5. This discrepancy is where the school is rightly focusing its attention. Analysis of data is now being used to pinpoint underachieving pupils, particularly within the more able group, however, these systems have not had sufficient time to impact on achievement..

A strong feature of the school's provision has been the widening of the good curriculum to make real links between different elements. For example, one group had written well constructed stories about relationships but, through their work on sketching in art, had enhanced this with good artwork to illustrate the point they were making.

While overestimating how well it is doing at this time, the school in its improvement plan is realistic about what still needs to be done. The effective management team, now strengthened under the new structure and including the governing body, has a good understanding of how to implement the necessary changes and ensure that all pupils reach their full potential.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of the more able pupils by using more sophisticated analysis of the assessment data and planning appropriate support.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily, gaining average standards in national tests in Year 6. However, this does not provide the full picture of progress. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and pupils start Year 1 with standards at least in line with those expected for their age. By Year 2, standards, although now starting to improve, have historically been lower than those expected because teaching here was not as strong. They then rise to the expected levels by the end of Year 6. Recent changes in staffing have made progress more even. Pupils with learning difficulties and in classes where teaching is particularly strong make good progress with a number exceeding their expected targets. The school is now working on raising the proportion of pupils who exceed the expected levels by supporting them more effectively, although the 2006 results indicate that this is still at an early stage. However, the challenging targets that have been set this year are likely to be achieved.

In subjects other than English and mathematics, there are examples of better progress. In science, for instance, standards are above those nationally and displays show that there are a number of confident artists and budding sportspeople.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Personal development, including that for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, is good. Pupils really enjoy school and behave well both in lessons and in the playground. A number of pupils mentioned that they could not remember any bullying and said 'Anyway, if it happens, it is dealt with very quickly.' These good attitudes to school are reflected in the much improved attendance which is now well above the national average.

Pupils know what is needed to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Some even said 'I feel guilty if I have too many sweets.' They adopt safe practices when using tools. Pupils are encouraged to use technology to help them with decision making. For instance, a group was undertaking some mathematical problems using the Internet, while others used animated presentations to describe their experiences. These are all central to the school's work in developing lively thinking and preparing pupils for the future.

Some older pupils are involved as sports captains while others buddy with younger children for reading. Too few connections are made between the personal and academic elements of support, such as the use of 'thinking and learning skills' to help pupils make better progress. The school is now tackling this priority.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching is good because the right changes have been made to ensure that best practice is being disseminated through the school. As a result, the proportion of pupils who make good progress is increasing. Strengths in teaching include good planning, methods and organisation, all of which challenge pupils. In addition, and following criticism at the last inspection, teachers are using ongoing assessment well to target work for individual pupils. Several teachers have been recognised by the local authority as particularly skilful and other staff have been able to learn from their expertise. This is all helping to raise achievement. However, the lack of analysis of trends in performance over the longer term inhibits even better challenge for some pupils, especially the more able. Improved information is now focusing teachers' planning and lesson delivery on raising the proportion of pupils who achieve above the expected levels for their age.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum. At the heart of this development has been the desire to balance both subject-specific knowledge with life skills. The curriculum therefore highlights what information should be learnt alongside, for example, communication skills and the skills of applying and using knowledge that has already been learnt. For instance, a Year 1/2 teacher had incorporated some of the best practice from the Foundation Stage to allow less mature pupils to have more play opportunities. In addition, the school uses good specialists to further enhance pupils' interests such as a sports coach from the local secondary school.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The care, welfare and guidance for pupils are satisfactory, although good pastoral systems are in place. Work with the local secondary school has meant that pupils with learning disabilities now have a continuous programme through this school and onto Year 11. All safeguarding procedures are carefully dealt with so that pupils feel safe and the school operates in an orderly way. Assessment procedures have improved but, until recently, have not been analysed well enough to provide a whole-school overview about trends in performance. This has meant that while individual pupils have been given good support on a day-to-day basis no analysis has taken place about how effective this has been overall. The new assessment leader is remedying this and has already been able to provide information about where improvements will have the most impact. This has provided a sharper focus on academic support to improve pupils' achievement.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has been instrumental in developing the school and has dealt sensitively and professionally with personnel issues. She has ensured that the good personal development has been maintained, teaching has improved and that pupils feel valued. Previous problems have meant that some improvements, such as the whole-school analysis of assessment, have stalled in the recent past and have affected the achievement of pupils. Nevertheless, the school has moved forward from its last inspection and has good capacity to continue doing so. Central to these developments has been the desire to ensure that pupils achieve well across a broad range of subjects as well as being prepared for their future life. The newly formed senior team has the capability to fulfil these aims even though some are relatively inexperienced. They are set on ensuring that standards rise and that pupils achieve well. The school's successes have been recognised through a number of national awards such as the Investors in People award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school is realistic about improvements that need to be made and the right developments are being put in place to achieve these. For instance, radical reorganisation of classes has meant that the staff are used effectively and so more, but not all, pupils achieve well. The governing body provides good support. Many governors make weekly visits to the school and have a good overview of what is happening. This, along with their expertise in areas such as personnel, finance, health and safety, means that they question decisions from first-hand knowledge and hold the school to account for them.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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>	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	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	2
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>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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.

## 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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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**

Thank you for looking after me so well during my recent visit. I enjoyed meeting and talking to you and hearing all about your school. I am sorry if I did not have time to talk to you personally but there was just so much to see. As I promised some of you in Year 6, I have included the main points of my report below.

- You are obviously proud of your school and enjoy the activities you take part in. I was impressed with the good behaviour and how willing you were to share your experiences with me.
- You are all progressing as you should, although some of you are doing better than this. It was particularly pleasing to see that the younger children in the Reception classes get off to a good start. Those of you who find learning more difficult are also doing well because of the good support you get.
- Many of you are reaching the levels we would expect for your age, although the more able among you could do even better than this.
- You are taught well and your teachers make sure that the work they give you will really make you think. I know some of you receive extra support and I have asked your teachers to check that this support is as effective as it could be. This will help more of you to reach the higher levels.
- You told me that you found your learning exciting and I can see why. This is because your teachers try and make some really good links between different subjects and you can then see why it is relevant.
- You also told me you were looked after well, you felt safe and there was very little bullying. I agree.
- Your headteacher and the rest of the staff lead the school well. They know how to make things better and have got some good plans for the future. I have asked them to make sure that they help more able pupils to do better, and I know they are working on this already.

Finally, I would like to wish you all the best for the future. You can play your part in helping to improve your school by making sure you work as hard as you can.