



St Andrew's CofE (Aided) Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 114556
Local Authority Brighton and Hove
Inspection number 289966
Inspection date 13 September 2006
Reporting inspector David Collard

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Belfast Street
School category	Community		Hove
Age range of pupils	4-11		BN3 3YT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01273 294800
Number on roll (school)	428	Fax number	01273 294802
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	R E Mattacks
		Headteacher	David White
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Andrew's is a larger-than-average, popular inner city school. It moved onto its present site in 2003 following a jointly funded project with a major shopping chain. The number of pupils whose first language is not English is higher than the national average and very much higher than other schools within the local authority. Significant numbers arrive at school with little spoken English. The movement rate of pupils in and out of the school is also high. The number of pupils identified with learning difficulties is above the national average, although there are no pupils with statements of educational need. At the time of the inspection, the school had an acting headteacher as the substantive headteacher had been seconded to support other schools within the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The quality of education at this highly effective school is outstanding. The last inspection in 2002 also reported positively but in the interim the leadership and management, the high quality of provision and pupils' achievement have all continued to improve. There are a number of significant reasons why the school is so successful. High on the agenda is the integration of all pupils into the life and work of the school. In particular, those with learning difficulties, those who show the potential to be higher achievers and those who do not speak English as their first language are all fully challenged. In addition, and just as importantly, everybody enjoys their education a great deal. Pupils enter the school with standards broadly in line with those expected for their age and progress excellently through the school. Pupils are very well prepared by their time in Reception for their start in Year 1. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in national tests over the last five years have often been exceptionally high, as they are now. Pupils achieve excellently across a broad range of subjects such as information and communication technology, art, physical education, modern foreign languages and music. As a result, they are very well prepared for their future life and well-being. Teaching is excellent overall. Emphasis is placed on identifying and dealing with potential difficulties at the earliest opportunity and, as a result, pupils make the best possible progress. Further evidence of high achievement is seen in the significant number of pupils with learning difficulties who are able to reach the levels expected for their age but from much lower starting points. The very calm, purposeful atmosphere of the school has not come about by accident. There is a common sense of purpose and the lighthearted but extremely professional approach to learning has been captured in the many exciting and challenging activities. This fostering of a balance between the emotional, social and academic elements means that the personal development, well-being and behaviour of pupils are excellent, as are their care, support and guidance. While the school's development of healthy lifestyles is very rigorous, some pupils are not always keen to take on board the messages they are being given. None of the strengths of this school would happen without the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and governing body. This is matched by a high degree of leadership skill from the senior and middle managers. All subject leaders, even those with little experience, have been expected to report and justify their subject improvement plans through detailed and evaluative evidence gathering. This then provides the outline priorities of the school improvement plan. For instance, relatively weaker performance by pupils in Years 3 and 4 was identified by the school, reflecting the national picture. The school quickly investigated the causes to uncover the reasons and is now taking steps to address them. The very high level of parental survey returns indicates that they almost unanimously agree that the school is providing a great education for their children. As one parent said, 'Both my children love school and I am extremely pleased with their academic, social and emotional development'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Eliminate the relatively weaker performance of pupils in Years 3 and 4.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Across many subjects, very high standards are being maintained through the continuous development of subjects by the co-ordinators and other staff. The school is rightly proud not only of its success in reading, writing and mathematics but also in its sporting, musical, creative and artistic achievements. This has been at the core of the excellent achievement that pupils make between the Reception class and when they leave school. In the Year 6 national tests, half the pupils usually achieve levels above those expected for their age and in science this rises to nearly two thirds. The work in books demonstrates increasingly good research techniques, fieldwork, analysis and self-evaluation of the work they have done. Pupils with different backgrounds make similar levels of progress to one another. This is because careful and regular analysis is made of pupils' progress. Those with learning difficulties are making particularly good progress because of the ways that systems have been put in place to support their education. An example of this is the use of 'bridging sessions' between lessons for pupils with emotional difficulties. These provide a five-minute opportunity to share any problems or successes that occurred in the previous lesson before starting the next and thus diverting any potential fall in performance. The school recognises that progress is not quite as fast in Years 3 and 4 as in other years and its current priority is to improve it.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The social skills of most pupils are already above average when they start in the Reception class but they develop through the school extremely well. By the time they leave, the pupils are socially adept and very well prepared to make a positive contribution to society. Attendance is above average but, despite the best efforts of the school, is affected by parents taking term-time holidays. Pupils talk enthusiastically about helping one another and the vibrant atmosphere demonstrates how much pupils enjoy school. On trips with the youngest pupils, for instance, older pupils provide support, which helps everybody understand how to stay safe. The school is very active as an Ecoschool, allowing pupils to take responsibility for the wider world. They independently organise their own fund-raising and actively participate in community events. All of this provides the right groundwork on which to build their future life. Keeping healthy is incorporated well into school activities although, in discussion, some pupils find the discipline of healthy eating difficult to put into practice. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is equally outstanding. During a conversation with an inspector over lunch, the impact from the school's provision was clear, particularly about how it will affect future wellbeing. This involved children not only from a White British heritage but also from Sudan, Zimbabwe, China and Uganda. Their clear friendship was matched by an ability to talk openly. This included comment about their hopes and fears, how their lessons would help them when they get older and discussing ways in which they could improve their work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching in all the classes observed demonstrated the skills that underpin high quality lessons and lead to the excellent outcomes for the pupils. Planning is sensibly managed but effective. Work is targeted at all levels of ability and many lessons provide different independent activities that will provide the challenge needed for pupils to both succeed and improve. Many pupils do not speak English as their first language and a number come into the school unable to communicate in English. In one lesson the teacher was helpfully writing the instructions in the child's home language and in another, local authority support had provided high quality visual resources. There is outstanding provision for pupils with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum is aimed at producing a balance between learning core skills and developing connections between different subjects. For instance, last year the school concentrated on finding innovative ways of recording the findings from science experiments. Analysis by the co-ordinator had discovered that too much time was being used writing, without adding to the quality of learning in science. The extra-curricular activities are also wide-ranging and varied and not just restricted to after-school clubs. The 'languages week' was a chance to learn about different cultures, traditions and beliefs. Quizzes, music, art, geography, food and literacy were all combined and descriptions by the children bear testimony to its success.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are extremely well cared for through the rigorous systems in place. All statutory requirements have been carefully addressed to ensure pupils are safeguarded. These include close scrutiny of any absences and home visits. Risk assessments are made, not only for trips but also about the possible problems with the school premises such as by installing guards to stop children catching their fingers. Academic assessments are equally rigorous but also very well used to target the next steps in pupils' learning. Information is particularly well shared between teachers, including profiles being exchanged each year. Bullying is not tolerated and pupils are encouraged to play a part in the process. One parent wrote, 'the situation was dealt with quickly and my son was included – this made him feel valued and listened to'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Through the excellent quality of its leadership and management the school has rightly gained a very high reputation. A key reason for this is the very clear understanding by the headteacher, the management team and the governing body of the improvements that are needed to keep the school moving forward. This has ensured that the self-evaluation is very realistic and is acted upon decisively. The governing body receives full reports on all aspects of the school. This provides all managers with an opportunity to hone their management skills as they are expected to be accountable for their decisions and for the stakeholders to be informed about whole-school issues. Priorities are shared and are acted upon collectively and with confidence. Many outside agencies are consulted about improvements. As well as the specialist support, this also provides the school with the information which enables it to measure itself against others. Despite the secondment of the headteacher to the local authority, the school continues to be managed extremely effectively under the direction of the acting headteacher. The innovative use of other staff, who have shown the potential to become senior managers, has given them an opportunity to take extra responsibilities which will aid their own professional development. The quality of the school's self-evaluation and the proven track record of continual improvement mean that the school is exceptionally well placed to maintain and improve further the high quality of education it offers.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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	1
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 really enjoyed talking to so many of you and joining you in your lessons. You all looked very smart and I am told you always look like that. Your singing in the assembly certainly started my day off well. You told me that St Andrew's was an excellent school and I agree. More importantly, you were also able to tell me some of the reasons why.
- You said your teachers taught you extremely well and they certainly do. They plan your lessons carefully so that you all make the best possible progress each year and reach really high standards. In fact, you may not know, but nearly half of those in Year 6 do better in SATs tests than would be expected for their age.
- You behave excellently and obviously enjoy being at school. This is to do with the exciting activities that you are able to take part in that make sure you are not bored, and because you can use what you have learnt in one subject to help you with others.
- Your lessons are also helping you prepare for your later life, such as how to go about researching information, using computers as well as being able to appreciate books, paintings and music.
- Your teachers are very careful to make sure you are safe while you are at school and the other staff all play their part in this.
- Your headteacher and all the staff are working extremely well on your behalf and know how to make sure you do your best. I have asked them to carry on with the things they have already started. In particular, they will try to make sure that when you are in Years 3 and 4 you make just as much progress as you do in other years. As your teachers know, these small changes will make the most difference to you and make your school even better. Finally... well done to everybody and best wishes for the rest of your time at St Andrew's.