

Upper Beeding Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125857
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	293380
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Taylor

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Dungay
Headteacher	Frances Connell
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002
School address	School Road Upper Beeding Steyning BN44 3HY
Telephone number	01903 812288
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size. The majority of pupils are White British. A small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds, but almost all pupils are fluent English speakers. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above average. Socio-economic circumstances are mixed. The school has been awarded the Silver Artsmark.

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 good school with several outstanding features. It has a very strong family atmosphere and works extremely well with parents, carers, the local community and other schools. The school's evaluation of its own performance is in some areas too modest. This is because, although staff and governors recognise how much the school has improved, they are not complacent and have a strong desire to make it even better.

Children quickly settle into school when they join Reception and make good progress across all of the areas of learning because of the outstanding provision and teaching. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good and standards are at least average by the time pupils leave. Pupils of all abilities progress well because teaching and learning are good. Staff have high expectations of pupils and continually work to share their expertise and develop their teaching. The curriculum is outstanding. It is very well planned to take account of pupils' interests, abilities and the mixed-age classes. Excellent use is made of relevant links between subjects, after-school activities, visits and visitors to develop pupils' talents and promote fitness and enjoyment.

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils are a credit to the school and to their parents. Their behaviour, relationships with one another, and attitudes to school and learning are exemplary. Care, guidance and support are also outstanding. This ensures that pupils are very safe, happy and well cared for, and that pupils and parents receive regular feedback about how well children are progressing.

Parents make a very good contribution to the school and to their children's education, and almost all have very positive views of it. Typical comments include: 'I am extremely satisfied with the education my child is receiving and the running of the school' and 'The staff do a fantastic job! I am particularly pleased with the open lines of communication between staff and parents.'

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher's outstanding vision and drive have enabled the school to move forward and overcome a number of challenges. The senior leadership team and the headteacher regularly and rigorously monitor standards, provision and pupils' progress. The next step for this school is to extend the role of middle leaders in monitoring lessons and evaluating standards in the foundation subjects, in which there are already clear signs of an upward trend. This would enable the school to evaluate fully the impact of developments on improving standards across the curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the role of middle leaders in monitoring lessons and evaluating standards in the foundation subjects

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly average, but below average in communication, language and literacy. There are, however, some variations that are dependent on children's birth date and whether they have previously attended the local playgroup or pre-school provision. Children in Reception achieve well in all the areas of learning.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have remained a little above average in recent years. In 2006 they were average in reading, slightly above average in writing, and above average in mathematics. Standards at the end Year 6 have tended to fluctuate. They dipped in 2004, and subsequently began to improve. They rose sharply in 2006, so that mathematics and science standards were above average and English standards were average. Almost all pupils in Year 6 met the challenging targets set for them, and many exceeded them. The improvement to standards at age 11 in 2006 is likely to be maintained in 2007.

Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. There are also examples in all year groups of pupils reaching good standards and making good progress in other subjects, especially in information and communication technology (ICT), music and art. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well because their needs are identified promptly, provision is very good, all aspects are well led and pupils are ably supported, both in class and through additional support. Pupils with particular talents, for example, in the arts, music and sports, are well provided for and challenged.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is evident in their above-average attendance rates, excellent behaviour and the great care they take with their finished work. Pupils are very friendly, polite and respectful. They show concern for one another, cooperate and mix well together. They confidently talk about their work and progress, and have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school. They like the staff and find them very approachable. As one pupil commented, 'Our teachers are very understanding.' Pupils eat healthy snacks and lunches. They regularly participate in vigorous physical exercise during lessons, breaktimes and after-school activities. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school, and to the local and wider communities. For example, older pupils take good care of younger ones, the school council regularly consults with other pupils and manages its own budget, and pupils regularly participate in village and local events. They make very good contributions to charities, including supporting a school in Kenya. Pupils develop a good knowledge of their own and other cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers manage behaviour well and relationships between staff and among pupils are very good. Consequently, pupils are happy in school and confident to ask and answer questions. Lesson planning is very thorough and identifies work that challenges and closely matches pupils' age and abilities. Teachers' subject knowledge and questioning are good. They provide a stimulating range of activities to motivate pupils. Teachers and their pupils make good use of ICT to enhance lesson delivery and to enable pupils to find things out for themselves and record their work in different ways. Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed. They make an invaluable contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. Although most of the teaching is at least good, and some is outstanding, a relative weakness in satisfactory lessons is that teacher input is too prolonged. Consequently, pupils' concentration sometimes slips and they do not have enough time to work independently. The school has worked very hard and successfully to develop the use of assessment to improve pupils' learning, and there is some

very good practice. For example, pupils' targets are reviewed regularly, parents and pupils get involved in assessing project work, and, increasingly, pupils are assessing their own learning and progress against given success criteria. Marking is regular and in most classes very informative, which guides pupils about how to improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum promotes enjoyment and meets pupils' interests and academic needs extremely well. In Reception children enjoy a very rich, stimulating and exciting set of experiences. This quickly gets them learning and develops their curiosity, imagination and independence. Elsewhere there is a strong focus on the basic skills, but not at the expense of narrowing the curriculum. Instead, careful planning of topics that links subjects together is having a huge impact on making learning relevant and meaningful, while enabling pupils to apply their basic skills to work across subjects. Very good opportunities are provided in the arts, especially music. The school makes excellent use of whole-school productions, themed days and weeks, the village and local community, visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. A wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs are very well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Very good induction and transfer arrangements help children in Reception to settle quickly, and pupils in Year 6 to approach the move to secondary school confidently. Teachers and the support staff know pupils' individual needs very well and treat them with considerable care and kindness. They are very quick to notice and provide support for those who need extra help, including pupils who are more vulnerable. The school maintains excellent links with parents, health professionals and external agencies to support pupils. Pupils' efforts and achievements are celebrated very well, which develops their self-confidence. They are very well supervised at all times and there are good procedures for checking staff and other risks. Academic guidance is very good. Pupils' views, including those about the impact of teaching on their learning, are regularly sought, valued and acted upon.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has shown outstanding vision and drive in developing strong teamwork, improving the school and minimising the impact of prolonged staff absences during the past two years. The school's greatest success is in overhauling the curriculum and assessments, thereby increasing pupils' enjoyment and accelerating their learning. Senior leaders support the headteacher very well. They and the headteacher regularly monitor lessons. Formal monitoring of teaching is increasingly supplemented by more informal paired observations. This is helping staff to reflect on their practice and share expertise. Data is analysed carefully to check pupils' progress and highlight where improvement is needed. Middle leaders provide good support to colleagues, but now need to gain experience in checking teaching and learning. This is especially the case in some of the foundation subjects where, although pupils' finished work and assessments are checked, few lessons have been observed.

Governors are very supportive of the school and bring a diverse range of expertise to it. In recent times they have become much more strategic and evaluative, and better at challenging the school. Self-evaluation involves all staff and governors and draws well on pupils' and parents' views. This is carried out very well, so that the priorities for school development are well founded. Financial management is good and resources are used well. The school makes very good use of its links with other schools to extend provision and exchange ideas.

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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>	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?	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	1
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
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 very much indeed for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking with you. We think that your school is a good school, with some aspects that are outstanding.

These are the things that work very well in your school:

- Teaching is good and this helps you make good progress. We saw many examples of the good work you have produced, in your books and on display around the school. We also read letters congratulating you on your whole-school productions and your high performance at music events.
- You are exceptionally friendly, well behaved and polite. You get on very well together and take good care of each other. You also work very hard and take pride in your work. We feel sure that your parents and teachers must be very proud of you.
- The staff take very good care of you. They listen to your views, encourage you to do well and tell you how you can improve your work.
- The curriculum in all year groups is outstanding. You told us how much you enjoy lessons and topic work. We noticed that you take part in lots of trips, clubs and other activities during and after school. These help you to develop your talents, enjoy school and to stay fit and healthy.
- The headteacher and senior leaders lead the school well. The staff are always thinking of ways to help you and to improve the school.

This is what we have asked the school to do next:

- We have asked the staff to look at lessons across all subjects, to see how well changes to the curriculum are helping to improve your progress and standards.

Thank you once again for your help when we visited your school