

Parklands Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125921
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315358
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Jon Palethorpe

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	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Suzanna Troy
Headteacher	Hilary Faulkner
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2004
School address	Durnford Close Chichester PO19 3AG
Telephone number	01243 788630
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school, which has recently reduced in class size from seven to six. However, numbers are rising again and the school is oversubscribed for entry to the Foundation Stage. Though close to the centre of the city of Chichester, a significant number come from outside the catchment area. The majority of pupils are White British. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average, because this includes pupils in the school's special support centre, which caters for up to eight pupils with social and communication difficulties. The pupil population is more mobile than average, which often has a negative impact on the school's academic results.

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. Teachers are not complacent, but are committed to raising the quality of provision further. Success is securely founded on much improved, and now outstanding provision in Reception. At the end of the Reception Year in 2007, reading, writing and aspects of mathematics were below the expectations for children of their age. This year all children are on track to meet goals expected in all areas of learning, with many exceeding these. This shows the current good and sometimes outstanding progress, due to the outstanding provision.

Parents are unstintingly supportive of the school and appreciative of the care given to their children. One parent described it as 'a school which recognises the important link between pastoral care and teaching and learning', while another praised the school's 'strong nurturing and caring ethos...this is reflected in my child's confidence and self-esteem which has grown while he has attended Parklands'.

Most pupils are now making good progress. The previous legacy of underachievement, particularly with younger pupils, has been tackled successfully through improved teaching and an improved curriculum. Almost all pupils are now reaching expected levels or above by the end of Year 6. Strategies and tracking systems now in place have improved provision enormously, paving the way for further improved standards.

Inspection findings confirm the school's view of teaching and learning as being good overall. Often good, and sometimes outstanding teaching is addressing the needs of learners, although not all teaching reaches this high standard. On occasions, higher ability pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Relationships are excellent, and pupils behave well and are keen to participate. The involvement of parents in pupils' learning and development is outstanding. For example, over 100 people attended a meeting for parents about mathematics calculations. The outstanding curriculum is having positive effects on learning, with pupils well motivated and enthusiastic. There is excellent support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the special support centre and in the main school, and due consideration is given to higher attaining pupils, with specialist weekend courses amongst the provision.

Equality of opportunity is promoted extremely well. In particular, the inclusion of pupils from the special support centre is an outstanding feature. The excellent provision there impacts positively, not only on the pupils in the centre, but in the rest of the school as well. The care, guidance and support for all pupils are major strengths of the school.

Leadership and management are good. All staff, together with the governors, are working to create a purposeful and caring environment. Comprehensive safeguarding arrangements ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after and their particular needs quickly assessed. Pupils recognise and appreciate what is done for them, and behave in a sensible and often very mature manner. The successful track record of good improvement since the last inspection, together with the effectiveness of recent initiatives, indicates a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the Reception Year with broadly expected levels of skills and knowledge for their age. Stronger areas are personal and social, and physical development, but reading is weaker. They are now making at least good progress, and most are leaving the Reception Year

with above average levels for their age, particularly in reading and writing. Children are keen to learn, and are taught how to behave and how to co-operate. The warm, positive relationships between staff and children provide children with good care which impacts positively on their well-being and personal development. Stimulating activities are planned such as the current topic on 'Superheroes', which has resulted in an impressive range of writing, role-play and creative work. Children spoke with enthusiasm about the range of activities. Leadership is outstanding, a good example of this being the very thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses, and strategies introduced to make improvements. The strong focus on teaching letter sounds is having a positive effect on children's reading and writing skills. Parents have been provided with information including a DVD on letter sounds to help their children learn at home. Children are involved in setting their targets, and they know how they can make progress. The outside area is stimulating, well resourced and provides a rich learning environment for children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards throughout the school so that more pupils reach the levels expected, and above, for their age.
- Improve the consistency of teaching so that more lessons reach the quality of the good and outstanding ones observed.

In the context of this good school, these areas for improvement are already well known and being effectively planned for.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in reading and mathematics are average at the end of Year 2, and in writing above average. This represents good progress, particularly in writing, as pupils' level on entry was below average. The focus on literacy, together with an emphasis on writing across the curriculum, has been particularly effective in raising standards in English. The 2007 Year 2 results were disappointing. However, careful analysis indicates that pupil mobility, with pupils often joining the school with lower levels than expected for their age, has had a significant impact on the school's results. This is still true for the current Year 2.

At the end of Year 6, standards are slightly above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. This represents good progress, as these pupils were below average at the end of Year 2. Mobility has adversely affected standards, particularly with a small cohort. The relative underperformance of boys last year has been addressed successfully through the improved curriculum, which has more first-hand experiences, and is more creative and appealing to boys. Texts have also been carefully chosen to appeal more to boys. Consequently, boys and girls are now making good progress. Pupils in the special support centre are making the expected progress for their ability.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils relish coming to school. They have good attendance, and their behaviour and attitudes are outstanding. This helps them to achieve well, and ensures they are suitably prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and say teachers 'make lessons fun' and 'are positive about everything you do'. They offer and discuss opinions

confidently and work well independently. Pupils are justifiably proud of the school's achievements in local sporting competitions and environmental awards. Pupils' knowledge of how to keep safe is outstanding. They have a strong awareness of how to avoid danger and take care of each other. All children understand the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of regular exercise and take advantage of the school's extensive grounds to run around. The vast majority of pupils take part in extra-curricular sporting activities. Their contribution to the school and local community is outstanding, for example through their strenuous efforts to raise funds for the local animal sanctuary.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, although there is further scope to strengthen their understanding of life in multicultural Britain. Exclusions, bullying or racist comments are virtually unknown. Pupils are proud of their school and say theirs is 'a very friendly school' and 'a good community'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Consistently good teaching is effectively promoting learning, enjoyment and achievement. There are effective procedures in place to tackle any identified weaknesses in teaching, such as in class support, where good practice is shared, and visits are made to other schools. Typically, good lessons are characterised by thorough planning, which includes different work for different ability pupils with so that everybody is appropriately challenged. There is a stimulating learning environment where lessons are made interesting and fun, and which pupils enjoy. Good use of interactive whiteboards and visualisers, a device to display pupils' work on the whiteboard, helps to engage and involve all pupils. Work by skilful teaching assistants is very effective, particularly in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers and teaching assistants in the special support centre are equally effective. On just a few occasions, pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet, higher ability pupils are not challenged sufficiently, or marking is not always particularly helpful in taking pupils forward to the next step in learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum has been carefully modified so that it now provides extremely well for pupils' needs. The new creative curriculum establishes links between subjects. Topics are exciting and innovative, such as the current one on Superheroes. Pupils' interest is roused and imagination is stirred, leading to some excellent creative work. The Writing and information and communication technology are used across the curriculum, raising standards in both subjects. The curriculum also successfully caters for pupils in mixed age classes. Good quality individual education plans indicate appropriate work for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and higher ability pupils are mostly sufficiently challenged. The curriculum in the special support centre is particularly well designed to meet pupils' specific needs. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education, including the use of drugs, and sex and relationships education. Links with other providers, such as the school nurse, or local police, help with some of this work. There is very good provision of enrichment activities such as clubs, visits and visitors, all contributing to enjoyment and achievement. An excellent outdoor learning environment is used well and is having a positive impact on standards and personal development.

The school is working towards Healthy School Status, the International School Award and the Autistic Awareness Award.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and reflect the strong commitment of all staff to ensure that all pupils enjoy their education and achieve as well as they can. This is having a positive impact on their personal development and progress. All staff know pupils and their families well and ensure that pupils' social and emotional needs are met effectively. The care taken over individual pupils is impressive. The way in which the school provides nurture and support for individuals in the special support centre is excellent, and enables these pupils to make significant strides in their development. The school works well with many local services to promote pupils' learning, and social and emotional well-being. Procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' academic progress are well established and are used most effectively by school leaders and class teachers to ensure that all groups make good progress. Pupils know and understand their targets and have a clear understanding of how to improve their work, although on occasions, some marking could be more helpful in this respect.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders and managers at all levels are providing high quality care and education enabling pupils to achieve well and grow up as sensible, caring young people. The monitoring and evaluation processes across the whole school, including at governing body level, are effective in bringing about the necessary improvements. Monitoring of performance is well established and used to set appropriate targets. The contribution of the headteacher is outstanding, and senior managers ably support her. The senior management team, subject leaders and governors all work well together, and make valuable contributions. These are having a positive impact on raising standards of teaching and learning and pupils' progress. The importance of the subject leader's role is well recognised. In particular, literacy and numeracy leaders are involved in lesson observations, work scrutinies, planning scrutiny, and providing the necessary strategies for improved teaching and learning in their subject. This is not quite so well developed for all leaders. Leadership in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children settle extremely quickly and well into the school's routines, and make a very good start to their learning. Leadership of the provision for special needs is outstanding, with clear procedures to identify and support pupils' individual needs. Governors are supportive and challenge the school well. They have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and contribute well to the school's development through an effective committee structure.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

16 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parklands Community Primary School, Chichester, PO19 3AG

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school in such a friendly way. It was a pleasure to be with you all and see the work that you are doing. It was good to hear how much you like school and enjoy the lessons. We found that yours is a good school, and does some important things particularly well.

You are making good progress in your work, and you do this because teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard for you, helping you to do your best. In fact, everybody in the school, including the governors, is working successfully as a team to help you. The school is especially good at helping the youngest children when they start school, and those of you who find learning difficult.

You enjoy the lessons so much because of the excellent curriculum. We loved some of the work you were doing, for instance the work on superheroes. It is good the way that it involves so many subjects. This, together with the visits you make and the visitors who come into school, make the subjects interesting and exciting. You respond to this with enthusiasm when you take part in lessons.

You have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy, and you take part in lots of extra physical activities. Cycling and walking to school is a very good idea, and you know how to keep safe doing that.

We have asked the teachers to make sure that all of you get really good teaching so that more of you reach the expected level for your age, and even better. You can help by always working hard, and telling the teacher if the work is too easy or difficult. Thank you once again for your help. It was lovely meeting you.

Yours sincerely

Jon Palethorpe Lead inspector



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