

Downview Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125924
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315359
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

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	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vacant Position
Headteacher	Mandy Williams
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2005
School address	Wroxham Way Felpham Bognor Regis PO22 8ER
Telephone number	01243 820511
Fax number	01243 833549

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2008
Inspection number	315359

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils join this larger than average primary school with a wide range of skills and abilities that are below expectations overall. The school has been through a period of significant staff change, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher. The school has Healthy Schools status and Basic Skills, Investors in People, Activemark and Eco-Schools bronze awards.

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. It is a happy, caring place where children fully engage in their learning. The headteacher has worked extremely hard to create a good staff team whose members are determined to improve the quality of provision for pupils. As a result, the school is now improving after a difficult time involving staff changes, reorganisation of leadership and the introduction of many new and necessary initiatives. Parents are very pleased with what the school provides. One parent who sums up the views of many said, 'I find the school to be very friendly, caring and welcoming and my child is thriving in this atmosphere.'

Children get a good start to their learning in the Foundation Stage. They thoroughly enjoy all that is on offer and so fully develop their confidence and independence. They make good progress across the areas of learning so that most meet the goals expected of them on entry to Year 1.

Standards are broadly average across the school. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Over time, there has been unsatisfactory achievement in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. The school has worked hard to address this through improved teaching and more effective tracking, and has been largely successful. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and Year 6. Across the school, teachers organise and manage lessons well, and use a range of strategies that engage the interest of pupils. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons, behave well and work hard. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning and relationships across the school are good. However, some lessons in Years 4 and 5 are not challenging enough and teachers do not use marking sufficiently to help pupils improve. This slows progress.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to work, and this is reflected in their good attendance. Older pupils enjoy the responsibility of being play leaders at break times. As they say, 'We can play games with the little children and help the lonely people.' The newly revised curriculum is exciting pupils' interests through its emphasis on cross-curricular links, drama and role play. Visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum well. Pupils particularly enjoy the sports clubs and the opportunities they get to take part in cricket tournaments.

Pastoral care is good. There are good procedures to ensure pupils' health, safety and protection. Pupils with moderate learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties get good support both from within the school and through the effective use of outside agencies. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving as the school is using tracking more effectively to target pupils at risk of underachieving, which is already improving rates of progress. However, it does not enable the school to quickly identify pupils not making enough progress in the longer term. All pupils have targets, but there are inconsistencies in their use in Years 3 to 6 and this limits pupils' involvement in improving their learning. Some older pupils were clear that they felt this was a missed opportunity. The headteacher provides good leadership. However, much is new, including the roles of senior leaders, and not fully embedded. Nevertheless, there is a strong commitment to improvement, clear action plans to raise achievement, improving teaching and a hugely positive drive within the school, giving it a sound capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There is good provision in the Foundation Stage and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. All staff work together very well under the strong, supportive guidance of the coordinator, who has been instrumental in improving the provision. Teaching is well informed and meets children's needs well. It ensures a good balance between child-chosen and teacher-led activities, giving the children good opportunities to work together and gain independence. A particularly good feature is staff's effective interactions in children's play. However, just occasionally, there are too many activities for effective adult support. Frequent assessments ensure staff target work well at children's needs, ensuring they make good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 by ensuring greater challenge in lessons and better match of work to pupils' needs.
- Improve tracking systems so that they provide more accessible information on pupils' rates of progress, particularly in the longer term.
- Improve the use of marking and the process of setting targets, particularly in Years 3 to 6, so that pupils know what they have to do to improve and have greater involvement in their own learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Over time, standards have been falling in Years 1 and 2 but this has mainly reflected changing year groups, sometimes with a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provisional results for the 2008 assessments show a slight improvement with average standards in reading and slightly above average standards in writing and mathematics, and this is supported by inspection evidence. Pupils have made good progress, given their capabilities and starting points. Writing is improving across the school due to the strategies the school has put in place, including regular writing assessments.

There has been a declining picture in standards at the end of Year 6, with some underachievement between Years 3 and 6. The school has been relentless in identifying and tackling this so that, although there is still some residual underachievement, mainly in Year 5, pupils now make satisfactory progress overall. They make good progress in Year 6 due to good teaching, and reach average standards. Pupils with moderate learning and behavioural difficulties receive good support, enabling them to make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about all the activities on offer. They feel safe in school and say bullying is rare because they all look out for each other. Pupils contribute well to the community through the school council, fund-raising for charity and involvement in events,

such as the 'Bognor Fun Run'. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, are clear that healthy snacks do not include sweets or chocolate, and enjoy all the exercise they get through their sports clubs and events, such as 'Walk to School' week. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils have a very well developed sense of compassion, recognise their personal responsibility within the school and have an awareness of their own cultural heritage. However, their understanding of others' beliefs and way of life is less well developed. Pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology satisfactorily support their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and use a variety of methods to engage them in their learning. This was particularly noticeable in an excellent lesson in Year 6 where pupils were fully encouraged to develop their language skills when role-playing Kensuko's Kingdom. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and the opportunities they get to work together on tasks. A good element of teaching across the school is the use of drama and role play, which enhances pupils' speaking and listening skills well. However, in Years 3 to 6, although lessons are interesting, teachers do not always challenge pupils enough through an appropriate match of work or effective questioning and this slows progress. Teaching assistants support pupils with moderate learning and emotional difficulties well through, for example, specific reading and phonics programmes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is soundly planned to ensure coverage and continuity. It positively engages pupils in their learning by teaching core skills, such as literacy and numeracy, through different subjects and themes. However, it is still very new and a good match of work in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is not fully integrated into planning. Pupils learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and personal safety through, for example, the Healthy Schools award, regular physical education and a unit of work on healthy living. Enrichment events, such as the Victorian School Day and Arts Week, make a good contribution to pupils' experiences and support their personal development well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school knows all its pupils well and ensures a caring and secure learning environment. Pupils appreciate this and say that the school is a friendly place where they are confident of adult support should they have any worries. Pupils with moderate learning and emotional difficulties have clear individual education plans and a good level of support, including the effective use of outside agencies and nurture groups within school to ensure their specific needs are well met. The school tracks pupils' progress and uses this information to identify and support pupils who are not doing well enough, so improving their rates of progress. Pupils have individual targets for their learning, but in Years 3 to 6, they are not always clearly in evidence as part of pupils' everyday learning, which limits their usefulness.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides dynamic leadership and a clear vision for the school's development. She has enabled it to become more open and transparent to all stakeholders and a happy place. As a result, the school is improving steadily. The appointment of a new deputy headteacher and the establishment of a strong senior leadership team this year is an important improvement. It has led to good progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2 but this is not so evident in Years 3 to 6 due to some past inconsistencies in teaching and learning. The governing body provides both challenge and support to the leadership team and appreciates the open approach that has been introduced. The school evaluates itself effectively and this constant review of systems and procedures is a major plank of its development. This is particularly so in the effective monitoring of teaching and learning that has led to good improvement in its quality. The school has good links with parents, local schools, outside agencies and other organisations which benefit all pupils, but particularly those who are vulnerable. The strong drive to make the curriculum engaging and fun has contributed to pupils' enjoyment of school life and their personal development.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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

6 June 2008

Dear pupils

Inspection of Downview Primary School, Felpham PO22 8ER I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed chatting to the school council and Year 6 pupils and were pleased to learn how much you enjoy school and how caring you are towards each other.

We think that Downview is a satisfactory and improving school.

Here are the things we like about your school:

- You make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 1, 2 and 6.
- You enjoy school, work hard and are keen to learn.
- Your headteacher and all the staff take good care of you and you, in turn, are thoughtful and kind to each other, particularly when taking on the role of play leaders to support younger pupils.
- You enjoy all the sporting activities that are on offer, particularly your cricket tournaments.

These are the things we think your school could do better:

- Improve your skills in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 by challenging you more in lessons so that you make better progress.
- Improve marking and use of targets so that you are clear about what you need to do to improve and are more involved in the process.
- Improve tracking so your teachers can quickly identify if you are making enough progress so that none of you gets left behind.

With best wishes for your future success.

Janet Sinclair Lead inspector

6 June 2008



Dear pupils

Inspection of Downview Primary School, Felpham PO22 8ER

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed chatting to the school council and Year 6 pupils and were pleased to learn how much you enjoy school and how caring you are towards each other.

We think that Downview is a satisfactory and improving school.

Here are the things we like about your school:

- You make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 1, 2 and 6.
- You enjoy school, work hard and are keen to learn.
- Your headteacher and all the staff take good care of you and you, in turn, are thoughtful and kind to each other, particularly when taking on the role of play leaders to support younger pupils.
- You enjoy all the sporting activities that are on offer, particularly your cricket tournaments.

These are the things we think your school could do better:

- Improve your skills in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 by challenging you more in lessons so that you make better progress.
- Improve marking and use of targets so that you are clear about what you need to do to improve and are more involved in the process.
- Improve tracking so your teachers can quickly identify if you are making enough progress so that none of you gets left behind.

With best wishes for your future success.

Janet Sinclair
Lead inspector