

# Ocklynge Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114462
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326014
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheila Browning

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	822
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Yvonne Riedel
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Trott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Victoria Drive Eastbourne BN20 8XN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01323 725839
<b>Fax number</b>	01323 646358

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well pupils achieve throughout the school and across subjects, the impact of teaching, learning and the curriculum on pupils' achievement and on their personal development, and whether actions taken by leadership and management have ensured the continuing success of the school. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, interviews with the headteacher, senior leaders and the chair of governors, and discussions with pupils and staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but no evidence was found to suggest that the school's own self-assessments as given in its self-evaluation were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a popular, significantly larger than average junior school. Pupils are mainly of White British origin. Over recent years, the numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds have increased; very few are at early stages of learning English. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average, although a significant number have lower than average reading and writing skills. The number with learning difficulties is a little below the national average. Due in part to the size of the school, these pupils have a huge range of individual special needs. In recognition of its work, the school has gained several awards, including the International Schools and Activemark Gold awards. The school also has Healthy Schools status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. One parent's comment was typical of many: 'My children always wake up and want to go to school and enjoy all the challenges that Ocklynge sets them for their continual growth.' Leadership and management are outstanding and provide a strong direction to improve the school. The school's self-evaluation is exceptional and committed staff share the headteacher's breadth of vision. Strengths in the skills of the senior leaders ensure that the well-focused priorities for school development are carefully planned and checked to have maximum impact. The extremely well informed and very supportive governing body hold the school to account in all that it does. The in-depth analysis of performance data and systems used to check pupils' progress, are strong features of Ocklynge. These and the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning indicate the school's excellent capacity for continued improvement. The high quality provision is the main reason why pupils achieve so well by Year 6. Standards are high and pupils are on course to meet challenging targets. Their progress is at least good, and is exemplary in English, mathematics and in other subjects sampled, namely information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography and physical education. In the 2007 national tests, pupils achieved less well than expected in science. The unvalidated 2008 results show an all-round improvement, except for average attaining pupils in science. To rectify this, the school is reorganising the balance of learning activities in science to meet pupils needs better.

The school constantly looks for reasons for any underperformance. To this end, it has successfully provided additional support for those pupils who have weaker reading and writing skills on entry. This, too, is having a positive impact. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve very well from their starting points due to the high quality support provided. Pupils needing additional support to access the curriculum due to emotional or behavioural difficulties are nurtured well and their confidence and social skills grow as a result of attending the onsite 'Oasis' facility.

The extensive curriculum has numerous strengths. It is continuously being improved to ensure pupils are excited and motivated to learn. The links between different subjects and the way that basic skills and international links are woven seamlessly together provide a relevant and exciting curriculum. For example, long-standing links with schools in India, Egypt, and Jamaica and a new link with Spain contribute significantly to pupils' global citizenship awareness. When Year 4 studied life in Kanji, they exchanged letters with Indian pupils and gained a real sense of life in an Indian village. Spanish and swimming are taught throughout the school. An extensive range of visits, visitors, school performances and extra-curricular clubs, including sports, cycling proficiency, chess and orchestra, are why pupils say they 'just love school'. Strong links with local schools provide shared and challenging programmes for gifted and talented pupils and extend the curriculum for all at Ocklynge. The focus on pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education has a key impact on their outstanding personal development. This is seen in pupils' exemplary behaviour and attitudes. Their above average attendance reflects their positive enjoyment of school.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues are very well developed through the global citizenship work. School council members are proud of the changes they have influenced, from school meals and playground equipment to the curriculum. Pupils show an outstanding awareness of how to lead safe, healthy lives and have developed

a very strong sense of community. They enjoy being 'play buddies' and are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives.

Teaching is excellent, with challenging lessons well matched to all pupils' needs. Lessons are very well managed in the restricted teaching spaces. Strengths are evident in teachers' questioning skills, lesson planning that ensures pupils enjoy learning through hands-on experiences, and the use of resources and the mutually positive relationships. Teaching assistants provide much valued support and are well focused on helping pupils to achieve well. Pupils say marking gives them a clear view about how they are doing and what to do to improve. Their work is often beautifully presented, such as in Year 6, when pupils had created portfolios with ration books, recipes and diaries based on their study of World War 2 and 'Pathé News' clips. The school provides an excellent level of pastoral care, support and guidance. Academic guidance is outstanding and teachers use information about pupils' progress very effectively to set challenging targets and ensure pupils know how to achieve them. The school has robust safeguarding procedures to ensure pupils' safety. Links with parents and external agencies are strong and are used most effectively to support learning, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and its work. The completion of the new 'pavilion' building is another successful consequence of the school's involvement in local initiatives in its work as a pilot 'extended school' for East Sussex. As one parent put it, 'In such a large school it is so nice that our daughter feels confident, valued and part of the Ocklynge community'. In this respect, the school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Build on the recent changes to the science curriculum so that pupils' achievement in science, especially that of average attaining pupils, is as good as it is in English and mathematics.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	1

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

30 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ocklynge School, Eastbourne BN20 8XN

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently to see how well you were doing. I really enjoyed the day and talking with some of you. You gave me a clear view as to why your school is outstanding.

- You make outstanding progress and reach high standards in your work, most especially in English, mathematics, ICT, history, geography and physical education.
- Your behaviour and attitudes to school are exemplary. You also told me that you thoroughly enjoyed school, and know how to lead safe and healthy lives.
- Teaching is excellent and your teachers plan exciting and interesting learning activities for you.
- I was especially impressed with the work you have been doing with schools in India, Egypt and Jamaica, and now the new link with Spain will certainly help you with your Spanish.
- Your headteacher and other staff work exceptionally hard to make sure yours is an outstanding school, and many of your parents think so too.
- The school has an excellent range of out-of-school activities.
- You told me about the important work of the school council and that your views matter and how much you like to be 'play buddies'.
- The school takes excellent care of you. It is a safe, calm place.

To improve things further, I have asked the school to:

- Make sure the recent changes to the science curriculum help you to achieve as well in science as well as you do in English and mathematics. You can help too by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Browning Lead Inspector