

St Andrew's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125996
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	328437
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	David Collard

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	421
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Peace
Headteacher	Christopher Luckin
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Shooting Field Steyning BN44 3RQ
Telephone number	01903 813420
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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

This larger-than-average school serves its local area with a small but growing proportion of pupils from further afield. Almost all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly similar to that nationally, although there is a Special Support Unit (SSU) which nine pupils attend, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. These statements are linked to various learning difficulties. Much of the time, these pupils are fully integrated, with specialist support, within mainstream classes.

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. It is continuing to improve well from a strong position at the last inspection. There are some outstanding features both in the quality of education provided and in the outcomes for pupils. Most noticeably, pupils become increasingly mature and independent and have excellent attitudes to learning. All pupils, even the youngest, are 'fired up to learn'. As this is a clearly stated aim of the school, staff are rightly proud of the success that has been achieved in developing pupils who are extremely well prepared for their future lives.

Children start with broadly similar standards to those expected of their age, although these are slightly lower in aspects of language and numeracy. Good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that pupils have slightly above average standards by the start of Year 1 and have significantly improved reading, writing and mathematical skills. Consistently good teaching through the school, and some which is outstanding, ensures pupils continue to achieve well and reach above average standards as they leave Year 6. After analysis three years ago, the school successfully set about raising the proportion of those gaining higher levels. There are significant numbers of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in national tests, often around half of the year group. In contrast, there are some occasions when teachers do not always give the highest level of challenge to those in the middle ability range, which is partly the reason why the proportion of pupils reaching the age-expected level in national tests remains broadly similar year on year. This is only part of the story, though, as pupils achieve well in other subjects such as physical education, music and art, all of which is helping produce well-rounded, confident and articulate young people.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy the extremely vibrant curricular activities. Excellent specialists in art, music and sport and a vast array of clubs bring an added dimension. As one pupil said, 'I can't think of anybody who doesn't go to at least one club!' Pupils relish opportunities to join in and take responsibility. In the playground, the pupils help each other and often there are groups of different ages playing and working together. The inspection supports the pupils' views that there is almost no bullying or misbehaviour. This is due to the very strong pastoral guidance and welfare.

The headteacher provides a clear and decisive vision of the school, aimed at getting the best from everybody, pupils and staff alike. Excellent governance provides a very high level of expertise and is able to both support and challenge decisions. Many staff are new with a high proportion that are early into their career. This has necessarily meant that many middle and senior managers are relatively inexperienced but are still given opportunities to develop their managerial expertise. They rise to the challenge and have produced good action plans even though not all of these actions are then channelled into the major key priorities. For example, in literacy, staff produced detailed analysis for different areas of provision such as writing, but senior leaders do not move this on to assess the impact upon different groups such as those in the middle ability range. Nevertheless, this is a school that knows its own strengths and what needs improving. From what has been achieved so far and from the plans for the future, this is a school that has a good capacity to make the improvements that could turn it into one of the best!

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for these young children is good. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that there is a freeflow between the indoor and outdoor areas and that children have as many opportunities as possible to learn through play. This has produced children who are extremely independent and confident and enjoy sharing their activities and experiences with each other. Relationships are a particular strength. Behaviour is good overall, at times excellent and only when the consistency of expectation from the adults varies is there some minor disturbance. Activities are carefully matched to children's interests and ongoing observation notes ensure individual needs are met in the coming lessons. The whole-school focus on writing is ensuring that children are enthusiastic to use these skills such as by making notes in the role-play areas or taking down patients' details in the 'doctor's surgery'. All this has had a clear impact on writing for different purposes with examples of more spontaneous writing, particularly by boys. The good leadership has identified that there are fewer opportunities to develop numeracy skills and has targeted this as the next area of development. Teachers try to encourage healthy and safe lifestyles, although on a few occasions forget to remind children about sun hats and sun cream and at lunchtimes many of the children eat quantities of crisps or chocolate.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all pupils in the middle ability range make as much progress as they can through consistently providing highly challenging activities, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Develop the roles of senior and middle leaders so they analyse and set priorities linked more closely to emerging trends in raising pupils' achievement over time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

After a good start in the Reception classes, pupils are extremely well prepared for more formal work in Year 1. They are still able, at times, to learn through play in both Years 1 and 2 and gain good basic skills by the end of Year 2. Through Years 3 to 6, this good progress continues, as it does for those in the SSC and for those with other learning difficulties. Assessment data show that almost all pupils are making at least the progress expected of them and increasing proportions, especially those with higher capability, are doing better than this. This rate of improvement is not so evident for those in the middle ability range. Nevertheless, standards reached by the end of Year 6 are above average. There are good examples of descriptive writing and thoughtful problem solving. Older pupils have good reasoning skills, show initiative and many have the ability to become talented artists, musicians or sportspeople.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are developing into extremely mature individuals capable of achieving whatever goals they set themselves. Unsurprisingly, behaviour is excellent, attendance above average and pupils fully adopt safe practices. Even those with identified difficulties with behaviour do not cause significant disruption in lessons. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is exemplary. Pupils think about others and, through their many connections with the local community, schools abroad and increasingly other areas of Britain, they value different cultures

and traditions without stereotyping them. Pupils enjoy helping others and unanimously agreed it would be a good idea to raise money for some drums to send to a school in The Gambia. This followed the Gambian headteacher's visit where he commented on how much he enjoyed their drumming and how it would be good to have some at his own school. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the many physical activities on offer. Not all pupils always 'practice what they preach' in terms of healthy eating, especially the younger children. However, those in Year 6 guiltily smiled when commenting that they 'only have treats in their lunchpacks on a Friday!'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

All lessons are planned well and aimed at making them as interesting as possible. Often, work between subjects is linked but without losing the emphasis on subject-specific skills such as in literacy, numeracy or technology. It is very noticeable in teachers' questioning techniques that pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, and how to take responsibility for their own learning. Teaching assistants are used well, not only to provide good support for those from the SSC but also a wider remit for bigger groups. For example, when one teacher was helping to answer a question, the teaching assistant seamlessly took over the teaching of the whole class for a short while. High levels of challenge are provided for the more able and good support for those with learning difficulties but on occasions does not extend to the middle ability groups. Pupils from the SSC are encouraged to join mainstream classes and are only given one-to-one support in the unit where this is necessary to reinforce their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

It is surprising that the pupils can fit in all the activities that are on offer. As well as the varied lesson activities, pupils are able to learn to play a wide range of musical instruments, have specialist sports coaching, an artist in residence and can also take part in master classes at the local grammar school. The range of trophies on display as well as nationally recognised awards indicates the success which pupils have achieved. One older group of pupils had difficulty in remembering all the activities they had been involved in recently. In addition, the personal, social, health and emotional development of pupils is extended through specific programmes and being able to train as peer mediators or playground friends. Induction and transition programmes to move between different schools and settings are excellent.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The pastoral support of pupils is outstanding. A high and successful priority is placed on safeguarding. In addition, both informal and formal procedures ensure that any family or individual problems are rapidly supported. Staff know the pupils and their families well, a fact which is supported through the returns on the parental questionnaires. While most parents are fully supportive of the school, a significant minority would like better lines of communication, something which the school is actively working on such as through its website. Academic guidance is excellent at an individual pupil level. Pupils understand what these assessments mean, can talk about what steps they need to take to improve and at what level they are working

at. At a whole-school level, there is comprehensive comparison with county and national data and about how much progress pupils are making. Less clear is how the school analyses the trends in performance that would further refine and eliminate differences over time. Nevertheless, assessment has effectively helped drive up teachers' expectations and pupils' standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The highly effective headteacher, along with the full support of staff, has moved the school on well. Through consultation, he has developed a management structure that aims to give as many staff as possible the opportunity to experience middle and senior management; a fact which has allowed many to go on to senior positions. The leadership groups are effectively monitoring different aspects of the school and helping improve provision. Senior leaders take good responsibility for improving each Key Stage and the work of the SSC. However, through its excellent approach to providing equality of opportunity, discussions between leaders and the experienced governing body have rightly realised that the role of these senior leaders now has to take more responsibility for whole-school strategies if the school is to achieve its aim of successfully planning for the future. The school has made an ambitious start on developing a strategy for community cohesion which is currently good. Governors have completed an audit and its impact can be seen in the new initiatives to develop more national links such as those with schools in Bradford and Crawley.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's CofE Primary School, Steyning BN44 3RQ

Thank you for looking after us so well during our recent visit. We very much enjoyed meeting and talking to so many of you. You will not be surprised to know that we have said that yours is a good school – more than that, we think there are some outstanding features. I have included some of the main points of our report below.

- You told us how proud you are of your school and we could see why. You are extremely well behaved, get on well with each other and work hard. In some lessons, we could 'hear a pin drop' when you were getting on with your work.
- You also said that you think you are taught well and we agree. Your teachers plan lots of exciting things and you make sure that you join in with as many as possible. There certainly are lots of different clubs and activities – you must have trouble trying to work out which ones to go to.
- We have said you are looked after well and you told us that you know who to go to when you are worried about anything. We were very impressed with how well you play together and how well you sort each other's problems out in the playground.
- Your headteacher knows just what to do to make sure you continue to improve. He is determined that you should all be as well prepared as possible when you move on. He and his staff are successful at making this happen.
- We have suggested a couple of things to make sure your school becomes one of the best. First, that your teachers make sure that all of you make as good progress as others. Second, that the senior leaders help develop those things which are the most important to help your school improve.

You can help. We noticed that you could all tell us about how to eat healthily but that there were a lot of crisps and chocolates in your lunchboxes. Come on then, think about how you can make your lunch as healthy as possible. We know you will all go on to work hard and take all the opportunities you can, so best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

David Collard

Lead inspector