

West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114425
Local Authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	338356
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Linda Pickles

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise Pettett
Headteacher	Carol Grey
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspection team visited 27 lessons and observed all of the 18 class teachers at least once. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at various papers, including development plans, the school's monitoring of provision, safeguarding documentation and 110 questionnaires completed by parents and carers. They also looked at questionnaires from 86 pupils in Years 3 to 6 and 50 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which teaching promotes pupils' achievement, particularly for boys
- the effectiveness of the school's leadership in improving teaching and progress based on accurate self-evaluation
- how well the curriculum and care, guidance and support meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those identified as vulnerable.

Information about the school

This is a new school, formed by the amalgamation of an infant and junior school in 2008, and is well above average in size. The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic groups is well above average, with the largest group being pupils from a Black African background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than that found nationally and a small minority are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including statements, is well above the national average, predominantly for autistic spectrum disorders, for which the school makes specialist provision. The proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school at other than the normal times is higher than usual.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School is a satisfactory school where the headteacher has successfully created a strong sense of purpose among all staff. The school offers a safe, friendly and welcoming environment where pupils behave well. Pupils from many different cultural backgrounds work and play together harmoniously as a result of their good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Parents and carers appreciate the school's work, particularly the good level of care it provides for its pupils, including those identified as vulnerable. Most parents and carers who responded to questionnaires agreed that the school keeps their child safe. As one parent stated, 'The school is lovely ' a warm, happy environment in which a wide range of abilities and cultures are catered for and encouraged to get along.'

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress from then on to reach average levels of attainment by the time they leave school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make adequate progress. The very small minority of pupils with statements of special educational needs in the resourced provision make good progress because of the specialist support they receive. Attainment is rising and progress across all core subjects is accelerating, particularly in writing and mathematics as a result of the school's actions in these areas. This, however, is not yet consistent across all year groups and the school has correctly identified that low attendance for a very small minority of pupils limits the progress they make. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good and outstanding lessons observed. Some teachers, however, do not make enough use of assessment information to plan activities which challenge all pupils or check their understanding during the lesson to ensure they are making good progress. Teachers and other adults have good relationships with pupils and manage behaviour well. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but the extent to which it helps them improve is variable. Pupils are given limited opportunities to be involved in assessing their own learning. The curriculum provides pupils with varied and interesting opportunities and contributes to their high levels of enjoyment. Themed weeks, which celebrate the school's cultural diversity, have a positive impact within the school but promotion of community cohesion beyond the school is underdeveloped.

Leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and actions to raise attainment by improving the quality of teaching are starting to have an impact through the school's good use of local authority support. Recent appointments have strengthened the leadership team and senior leaders have clear roles and responsibilities for monitoring their subject areas. Improvement plans identify clear priorities that underpin the school's satisfactory capacity for sustained

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improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics through improving the proportion of good and better teaching by:
 - sharing existing good practice within school
 - using assessment information more rigorously to plan work which more accurately challenges all pupils to make good progress
 - providing more opportunities to check pupils' understanding during lessons.
- Improve the quality of assessment by:
 - ensuring marking makes clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work further
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to assess their own learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The quality of learning observed in lessons during the inspection was satisfactory overall, and attainment levels in the older classes were broadly average. Pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning and cooperate well when working in groups or talking to partners. In an outstanding Year 6 English lesson, pupils made excellent progress when planning the introduction to a story because the writing activities reflected their different ability levels. Pupils were engaged and motivated because they had a clear understanding of what they were being asked to do and were involved in assessing how successful they had been. Boys' progress in mathematics is accelerating and reversing previous underachievement as a result of well targeted support both in and out of class. Assessment information indicates boys and girls make similarly sound progress across subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities develop into confident learners because of the high quality support they receive. The very few pupils with complex needs who attend lessons with different classes are well supported and this makes a significant contribution to their good achievement.

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their good behaviour in classrooms and on the playground. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, particularly when using the internet. They say they feel safe in school and are confident that any concerns they have will be sorted out by an adult. Pupils feel their views are listened to and are proud of their contribution to the new curricular topics, which reflect their interests, and the sports equipment purchased by the school council. They have a good understanding of how diet and exercise contribute to a healthy lifestyle and participate in a range of sporting activities. Pupils have a good understanding of the local community because they take part in local events and regularly sing for elderly residents in the area. Pupils show respect and consideration for each other and are proud of their fundraising activities for local and national charities to help others less fortunate than themselves. The extent to which pupils develop workplace skills,

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including the use of information and communication technology (ICT), is satisfactory and they are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education. Although overall attendance is low, it is average for the oldest pupils.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan a range of activities which reflect pupils' interests but these do not always provide sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils during group activities, but opportunities to help pupils while the teacher is introducing the lesson are sometimes missed. Pupils make good progress when expectations of what they can achieve are high and assessment data are used effectively to plan activities which match their differing ability levels. In a good Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils achieved well because activities built on their prior learning and sustained their motivation and interest. Skilful questioning was used effectively to clarify misconceptions and pupils were actively involved in checking how well they had done during the lesson. Where progress is slower, tasks do not sufficiently reflect pupils' ability levels to ensure good progress and too much teacher talk limits

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they have learnt. Pupils' work is marked regularly; however, the extent to which it informs pupils how they can improve their work and gives them opportunities to assess their own progress is inconsistent.

Good levels of care and support enable the individual needs of pupils to be met. The school works closely with a range of external agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Close working with specialist agencies provides good support for pupils with complex needs. There are clear systems in place for monitoring attendance and the school provides effective support for families who are experiencing difficulties. The school has been successful in reducing absences, particularly for older pupils and for short periods of time. The school recognises, however, that more can be done to extend the rigour of its current systems to reduce overall and persistent absence further.

The curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs and good links are made across subjects to make learning more meaningful for pupils, who were directly involved in planning new topics. ICT is well used to support learning and pupils have good opportunities to develop their use of interactive technology across all subjects. Extra-curricular clubs are varied and well attended and a range of enrichment activities, including themed weeks and residential visits, make a significant contribution to pupils' good personal development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been successful in setting high expectations and, together with her senior leaders, has developed a team committed to raising standards and achievement. There is a clear sense of direction and a common purpose, established in a relatively short period of time, which are shared by staff and governors. Planning is centred on raising standards and senior leaders recognise that the quality of teaching needs to improve further in order to reach the challenging targets the school has set. Governors provide satisfactory challenge and support and are developing appropriate procedures so they are more able to hold the school to account. The school has developed clear systems for monitoring pupils' progress, which are enabling swifter identification of potential underachievement so that early interventions can be put in place. The impact of these improved procedures has yet to be seen in accelerating progress consistently across all subjects. The school adequately promotes equality of opportunity and tackles

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discrimination and there is no significant variation in the outcomes for different groups. The protection of children has a high priority and procedures for safeguarding are good. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Pupils learn about life in different communities because the school celebrates the rich diversity of its own community. The school recognises that there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of other cultures within Britain and the world beyond. Links between home and school are strong and the school's effective work with a range of other partners makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment and well-being.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter school with skills below those expected for their age. End of Early Years Foundation Stage assessments in 2009 showed that attainment improved on the previous year. Children achieve well and by the time they enter Year 1 they are working at levels that are in line with the national average. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in both Nursery and Reception because teachers respond to their needs and interests and provide them with many opportunities to develop basic skills. They enjoy learning, play well together and understand the importance of taking turns and sharing equipment. Assessment data are used effectively to provide learning experiences that are well matched to children's needs.

Teachers provide a good balance of activities led by adults and those that children choose for themselves and outdoor provision is varied and well maintained. Additional

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adults support children's learning effectively in the majority of lessons, although opportunities to extend their understanding through questioning are sometimes missed. Children's safety and welfare are promoted well through high levels of supervision and support for different activities, although procedures for ensuring all children regularly wash their hands before eating are not always consistently applied. Staff work well together and the Early Years Foundation Stage is led effectively. The leader has a clear understanding of strengths, including the effective use of additional adults, and has correctly identified improving attendance as an area of high priority. Systems for monitoring teaching and outcomes for children are robust and links with parents and carers are strong.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

From the returned questionnaires, it is clear that the school enjoys the confidence and support of the very large majority of parents and carers. Most responses to questions were positive and almost all agree that their children enjoy school. A few noted concerns about the extent to which the school meets their children's needs and how effectively the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. These concerns were shared with the headteacher, although inspectors found that the school provides a good level of care, guidance and support for pupils. Behaviour observed in lessons and around school during the inspection was good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 421 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	62	38	35	2	2	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	65	59	41	37	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	48	44	48	44	11	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	48	45	41	9	8	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	54	49	55	50	5	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	52	47	50	45	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	39	50	45	4	4	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	43	39	50	45	4	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	41	51	46	7	6	4	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	38	50	45	10	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	33	53	48	11	10	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	47	43	47	43	9	8	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	52	39	35	5	5	4	4

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



13 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School, Hove, BN3 8BN

Thank you for making the members of the inspection team so welcome when we came to your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views about the school. You told us that you enjoy school and the teachers and other adults take good care of you. We judged your school to be satisfactory, which means that it does some things well but some things need to be improved.

These are the things we think are good about your school:

- The adults in school look after you well and help you to develop into caring and considerate young people.
- You behave well in lessons and around school.
- You have good relationships with your teachers, adults in school and your friends.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep yourself safe in school and at home.
- Pupils from lots of different backgrounds get on well with each other.

To help the school become better, these are some of the things we have asked the headteacher, teachers and governors to do:

- Make sure that work in lessons is not too easy for you.
- Give you more opportunities to show what you have learnt in lessons.
- Give you more help to make your work even better and involve you more in finding out how well you are doing.
- Make sure that more of you come to school regularly.

You can help by coming to school every day and continuing to try hard in lessons. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Pickles Lead Inspector

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