

# Grays Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114441
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	338363
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Kubiak

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	237
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Fears
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Terrey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Western Road Newhaven BN9 9ED
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors observed 11 lessons taught by seven different teachers. Additionally, two intervention sessions providing additional learning support for pupils were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, representatives of the governing body and a speech and language specialist. Parents were spoken to informally around the school and also observed in a parent training session. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at samples of pupils' work and assessment records and a range of documents including the school's policies, strategic plans, evaluations and assessment information. The team analysed 113 questionnaires received from parents and carers and 31 from staff.

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

- the impact of work to improve the achievement of boys
- the success of strategies to improve pupils' writing
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in improving teaching and raising pupils' attainment
- the steps taken to improve pupils' attendance.

## Information about the school

The school is on two sites, with a separate nursery building two miles away from the main school. The number of pupils has reduced since the last inspection and the catchment area now includes only Newhaven town. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average. Many more pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The complexity of their needs has increased since the last inspection and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is high. The school holds numerous awards including a Learning Platform Award for Excellence received in 2009, an International Schools Award and the ICT Mark. The school has also been awarded ArtsMark Gold for the third time running in May 2010. It offers extended services, including breakfast, afternoon and after-school clubs. ½

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Grays Infant School is a good and improving school. It offers outstanding care and provides a very supportive environment in which pupils' achievement is gaining ground. The staff are passionate about their school and highly committed to their work and the pupils. Led well by the headteacher, all staff have high expectations of the pupils.

Staff have worked hard to improve the attainment of pupils since the last inspection. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now outstanding because of the high quality of provision. In Key Stage 1, lessons are lively and purposeful. Intervention and small-group work is very well targeted on those requiring additional support. Pupils achieve well. They make good progress and their attainment is broadly average when they leave, albeit with girls making better progress overall than boys. The quality of pupils' writing has improved, although attainment in writing remains weaker than in reading and mathematics. More pupils are now exceeding the levels expected by the time they leave. While teaching is effective, some parts of lessons are not planned carefully enough to meet all pupils' needs, with the particular result that boys do not always engage in learning as thoroughly as the girls. The monitoring of teaching has been effective in bringing improvements. However, some observations do not reflect back systematically enough to previously identified areas for improvement in teachers' practice so as to check the progress made.

Pupils enjoy school and the outstanding care and guidance support them in behaving very well indeed. They are proud of their school and keen to take on responsibilities. Pupils understand fully the need to adopt healthy lifestyles, and initiatives such as Walk to School week are very well supported by both pupils and staff. They make an outstanding contribution to the local community, helping with day-to-day tasks and projects such as charity fundraising wherever possible. Pupils' enjoyment is rooted in an outstanding curriculum which ensures that they are given stimulating and exciting things to do. They enjoy projects linking different curriculum areas and building on real-life experiences, such as visiting the zoo.

ï½ The school provides an inclusive learning environment where any special individual needs are given a high priority. The Learning Platform provides excellent opportunities for parents to be able to see their child's progress and to learn more about what goes on in school. The school works very hard to build links with parents, who feel that the school does an excellent job in involving them in their children's education. The school works equally hard to build effective links with the wider community so as to broaden pupils' learning experiences and further enhance the care offered to them. Together with improvements in achievement and an accurate awareness amongst leaders and managers at all levels of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and outcomes, such

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initiatives demonstrate that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of teaching further in Key Stage 1 by ensuring that activities are planned consistently well to meet all pupils' needs, but notably those of boys, so they are engaged thoroughly in learning at all times. Improve the impact of lesson monitoring by ensuring that observations focus more closely on the aspects of individual teachers' work which have been identified as requiring improvement.
- Improve the impact of lesson monitoring by ensuring that observations focus more closely on the aspects of individual teachers' work which have been identified as requiring improvement.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils typically make good progress in lessons, with outstanding progress evident on some occasions. Lessons are characterised by positive attitudes to learning and pupils taking a pride in their work. Progress is best when learning is practical and when ideas explored through discussion are put directly into practice. For example, rich discussions were seen which led to pupils writing about science. Girls make good progress in learning to work independently and make decisions, while boys require more support. Pupils have below average skills in speaking and listening when joining Year 1 and make good progress in reversing these weaknesses, although they continue to impede the progress of some pupils. Pupils leave the school with broadly average attainment. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support provided for them. Pupils' social and moral development is good and they learn to behave considerately toward each other, knowing all about the 'golden rules'. Pupils take an active part in most areas of the school. For example, they proactively collect litter from around the school, help in the school garden, serve on the school council and record podcasts of the week's news, which are available on the learning platform. They have a very good understanding of how to lead healthy lives and are keen to participate in the range of after-school clubs. For example, pupils talk confidently about road safety and about safe use of the internet.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Assessment information is thoroughly analysed and used effectively to plan lessons and track pupils' progress. Lessons engage pupils' interest because they are exciting and well structured. The purpose of the lesson and the features of effective work are shared well with pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are outstanding so that the learning environment is positive. On occasion, teachers' questioning in discussions is not targeted well enough at pupils of differing ability or takes too long for some of them. Equally, some tasks are not challenging enough for pupils of middle ability. Both circumstances involve boys more than girls and result in their slower progress. The use of talking partners is effective in encouraging pupils to develop their evaluative skills. Classrooms and outdoor learning environments are well organised to support learning, for example through displays that help pupils to remember their targets or provide prompts for learning.

The curriculum is adapted very well to meet pupils' needs and broaden their experiences. Themed activities reinforce learning by making useful connections between subjects that pupils enjoy. Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills are good. The expressive arts are given a high priority and are much valued by pupils. A wide range of extra-curricular activities are popular with pupils and contribute to their enjoyment, and those in sport reinforce messages about the importance of leading a healthy life. Strong links are made with the local community, for example through participation in 'Newhaven in Bloom' and the Brighton Festival. International links are also strong, for example through connections with a school in Ghana. Here again the school's internet-based learning platform is used well to share information and support

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learning.

2½ Pupils receive outstanding care, guidance and support. All pupils are known as individuals and staff are very well aware of issues affecting them, for example where pupils are vulnerable or at risk. The school works closely with partners such as social services, health services and the local children's centre to support pupils and families. The extended services provide recreational activities for pupils, further developing their social skills. Staff carefully monitor the progress of each child and adjust the support as required. The school goes to great lengths to help pupils attend well. Attendance is broadly average and the school is working closely with children and families where attendance is a concern.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders and managers are a strong and cohesive team, inspired by the headteacher, and are passionate about the school. Morale is high and the well-being of the staff is paramount. Priorities for improvement are clearly defined, using detailed monitoring information that feeds into well-focused evaluation. Action to bring about change is pursued with enthusiasm and energy and the impact is well monitored and priorities then redefined. All staff have a leadership role of some kind, and this ensures that they all contribute to whole-school improvement. The impact made by the school on the achievement of different pupils is checked carefully and effective interventions are implemented to reduce variations. The governors have good levels of expertise and are not afraid to challenge the staff whilst also supporting them. They take an active part in many areas of the work of the school; for example, the governor responsible for special educational needs and/or disabilities attends transition meetings for pupils as they complete Year 2. Effective engagement with parents, carers and the local community reflects hard work by a wide range of staff. The school's positive approach to community cohesion extends to making links with schools in the local, national and overseas communities, as reflected in its International Schools Award. Safeguarding the pupils is given a very high priority. Procedures are reviewed regularly and the school carefully balances the need to offer the pupils exciting experiences alongside the need to keep them safe.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although few reach the expected development levels when joining Year 1 because of their very low starting points. Language and communication, alongside personal, social and emotional development, remain key weaknesses. Children settle very quickly and excellent levels of care ensure that they are happy and confident, and separate well from their parents and carers. Excellent transition arrangements include home visits by the staff, and children visiting the setting before joining. Nursery children who stay for the afternoon club are cared for within the main school and share the Reception classes' resources, and this supports their transition from the nursery to Reception. There is an excellent range and balance of child-selected and adult-initiated activities. Children are encouraged to become independent learners. In addition to the well-resourced classrooms, the shared and outdoor areas offer excellent opportunities for learning. These are also well resourced and inviting for children. The flow of children between the different areas is seamless and behaviour is excellent. The children's progress is tracked regularly and a rigorous assessment process begins with the home visit and assessments within the child's first week at the setting. The use of puppets is highly effective in supporting learning, and children are captivated by their use. Good use is made of local resources such as Newhaven train station. Cross-curricular activities are linked effectively to visits to build on the children's interests and real-life experiences such as when they went on the train to Seaford. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and this is reflected in the quality of provision, which is monitored and developed very carefully to ensure that children get off to a flying start.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

The response to the questionnaires was very supportive of the overall effectiveness of the school and the efforts to involve parents and carers in their children's education. The majority of them felt that their children were making enough progress. They took a particularly positive view of the quality of the care provided, and the fact that their children felt safe at school and enjoyed their time while there. The small number of individual concerns followed no particular pattern.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grays Infant 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 113 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 237 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	83	73	28	25	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	91	81	22	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	68	60	42	37	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	79	70	33	29	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	83	74	29	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	63	41	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	62	38	34	5	4	0	0
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)	77	69	31	31	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	72	64	38	34	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	53	49	43	3	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	63	56	47	42	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	81	72	29	26	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	84	18	16	0	0	0	0

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



9 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grays Infant School, Newhaven BN9 9ED

This letter is to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school and to tell you what we found. The things you told us about the school were very helpful in reaching our judgements. We think you attend a good school and that it is in a good position to improve further. Here are the things which most impressed us.

- The staff take outstanding care of you and help you all to behave excellently. You told us that they are always there to help you out.
- Your school is very attractive, with lots of displays of your work. You look after your school and are very proud of it.
- Lessons are interesting and the staff are good at helping you to learn. They give extra help to those of you who need it, often in small groups, and this works well.
- The staff make sure that they know how quickly you are learning and put help in place if you slip behind.
- The headteacher and the other staff work hard to improve the school. They also work very hard to help your parents and carers get involved in your learning. One of the ways that they do this very well is through the Learning Platform.

I have asked the headteacher to add the following ideas to her plans for the future.

- In Years 1 and 2, you sometimes spend too long working as a whole class, when it would be better for some of you to start more quickly on the task. You can help by always being ready to start work.
- When teachers monitor each other's lessons, they should always check that the teacher is doing what they have been asked to improve in the past, and give them more ideas about how to make the teaching even better.

Keep up the hard work and thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Michael Kubiak

Her Majesty's Inspector

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