

Peter Gladwin Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114443
Local Authority	Brighton & Hove
Inspection number	338364
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2010
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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 of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel James
Headteacher	Catherine Keith
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2001
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent over half their time looking at pupils' learning, visiting 13 lessons taught by seven different staff. They also held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' written work, records of their progress, lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's self-evaluation documents, including records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Inspection questionnaires were received from pupils, staff and from 41 parents and carers.

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

- how well pupils make progress through the school, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2
- how consistent and effective the teaching is and how well staff use assessment to plan work for pupils at the right level
- the impact of the school's actions to raise levels of attendance
- the effectiveness of school leaders, including senior leaders, middle managers and governors in promoting higher standards and improved progress by pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The pupils are predominantly White British and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average. Of these, the majority have moderate learning difficulties or speech and language issues. Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. Reception and Year 1 pupils have experienced significant disruption in the last term as a result of building and refurbishment works in the school.

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

This is a successful school which has made considerable progress in the last four years. Attainment has risen significantly since the previous inspection as a result of the vision and hard work of school leaders. The school is very committed to the well-being and personal development of its pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy school very much and feel very safe there. Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning, work diligently and behave outstandingly well. They have an exceptionally good understanding of healthy lifestyles. In spite of the school's best efforts, however, attendance remains low.

Other than in the Early Years Foundation Stage, most pupils achieve well. Some weaknesses in assessment and planning, exacerbated by disruptive building works, have constrained the progress of Reception pupils recently. The pace of learning picks up significantly in Years 1 and 2 and standards at the end of Year 2 have risen steadily from a very low base. Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils learn effectively in Years 3 to 6 and their progress has improved year-on-year, systematically eroding the legacy of past underperformance. The school has gained a well-deserved reputation for its rich, innovative and engaging curriculum. This enables pupils to build their research and independent learning skills as well as achieving impressive standards in subjects such as art, geography and history.

Teachers use some aspects of assessment well to check learning and to plan lessons. Much feedback to pupils is oral and this often provides effective guidance for improvement. However, teachers' marking of written work provides little guidance as to how pupils could improve. While the analysis of assessment data is rigorous and identifies underperformance promptly, the use of individual targets for improvement is inconsistent and has limited impact.

The headteacher provides effective leadership. The school runs very smoothly and self-evaluation is realistic. Incisive action is taken to tackle identified weaknesses. The monitoring and improvement of teaching and learning are good, ensuring good progress in a high proportion of lessons. The engagement with partner institutions, particularly the joint working with a neighbouring special school, is a significant strength. Given how much has been achieved since the previous inspection and the determination of the leadership team, the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon current strategies to increase pupils' attendance, in line with the annual targets set by the local authority.
- Ensure that teachers' marking provides pupils with clear guidance as to how they

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can improve their work and that individual pupils' learning targets are implemented more consistently and effectively.

- Ensure that children make more rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage through:
 - more rigorous monitoring, recording and evaluation of their learning and progress
 - providing activities which are more consistently matched to the needs of individual children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Across the school, pupils build well on their previous learning and their attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. In general, progress increases as pupils move through the school and is most rapid in Year 6. Here, pupils now make outstanding progress, attaining above average standards in mathematics and English and well-above average standards in science. Progress in Years 1 and 2 has also improved since the previous inspection. As a result, attainment levels are rising steadily at the end of Year 2. Across the school, progress is good for all groups of pupils, such as those entitled to free school meals, those with additional learning needs and those who are gifted or talented. The school constantly evaluates the impact of all additional support provided to ensure that it remains effective.

In lessons, pupils show that they are developing a secure command of English and mathematics skills. In a very successful Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils responded very well to the challenge of rigorous questioning, carefully accounting for each step in their calculations and analysing where errors may have arisen. Pupils' topic books offer many examples of high quality creative writing, imaginatively derived from texts such as *Where the Wild things are* and *Kensuke's Kingdom*, as well as mature examples of embroidery, based on Japanese Hokusai art and impressive pastel sketches of geese in flight, inspired by *The Snow Goose*.

The school's positive ethos leads to a strong sense of inclusiveness, commitment to the school community and consideration for others. There have been no recent exclusions. The weekly 'Family Group Learning' sessions strongly promote cooperation and empathy across the year groups. The school council provides a good forum for pupils' views. Pupils demonstrate good social and leadership skills and above average basic skills. It is to the school's considerable credit that, despite the low attendance of a small group of pupils which affects the overall figures, pupils' learning and progress have accelerated considerably and standards have risen significantly in recent years.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?

School leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching. Staff work very closely together to facilitate collaborative planning and share good practice. While teaching is most effective in Years 5 and 6, most lessons seen were good. Teachers are highly effective in promoting pupils' ability to work independently, carry out their own research and make decisions for themselves. Consistent behaviour management strategies generate a positive environment for learning. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support learners, particularly those with additional learning needs. Some aspects of assessment, particularly oral feedback and pupils' involvement in evaluating their own work, successfully promote pupils' progress. However, while individual targets exist, there is no common approach to their implementation. Consequently, they make an inconsistent contribution to pupils' learning.

The curriculum is a significant strength. It is primarily focused on embedding key skills in literacy and numeracy. Alongside discrete subject teaching, the school has developed a range of imaginatively structured and highly engaging topics, based around either core literary texts or thematic areas of history and encompassing aspects of writing, geography, science, art and music. These activities contribute strongly to the development of pupils' creativity, thinking and research skills. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum does not, however, challenge children so effectively and this constrains their progress. Small group interventions in Years 1 to 6 are precisely targeted on pupils' specific needs. Good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education, the wide range of visits and visitors and extensive extra-curricular provision all impact strongly on pupils' good personal development.

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Staff have a very good knowledge of children's needs. The school does much to support pupils and families in difficulties. It works very well with outside agencies to support the health, social or behavioural needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The school has implemented many strategies to raise attendance and there are clear signs of improvement in the current year. The large majority of parents and carers are responsive to the school's efforts and ensure that their children attend frequently. However, the response by the small number of parents and carers whose children's attendance remains too low does not fully reflect the school's efforts.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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 senior leadership team has worked tirelessly to raise expectations across the school. There has been resolute action to tackle previous underperformance by enhancing the curriculum and improving teaching and learning. Since 2005, there has been an unbroken trend of improvement, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Effective systems are in place to ensure that the school runs smoothly, supported by rigorous analysis of data and challenging targets for improvement. Middle managers, such as subject leaders, are effective practitioners. They accurately evaluate pupils' performance in their subjects and have a good understanding of their roles in promoting this.

The governing body is very supportive. Governors understand the school's strengths well and have a good involvement in shaping its future direction, including playing a central role in driving through the current redevelopment of the premises. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met, including the good procedures for safeguarding pupils. A very high priority is given to their safety and well-being on the premises and in the grounds. Roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding are clearly defined and unambiguous. Potential discrimination is tackled resolutely. Equality of opportunity is promoted well, for example by rigorously evaluating the performance of all pupils to ensure that provision meets the needs of all. The school promotes community cohesion well. However, while there is very strong engagement with local issues and some good global links, pupils have relatively fewer opportunities to engage with the diverse cultures which characterise contemporary Britain.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are slightly below the levels expected for their age. They settle quickly because of good induction arrangements and sensitive adult support. Children are well cared for and have good relationships with staff. They play together confidently, feel safe and secure, move freely between activities and behave very well. Children's attainment is around the expected level by the end of the Reception Year, indicating satisfactory progress for most. However, progress is good in communication, language and literacy, resulting in attainment reaching slightly above average levels. This is the result of regular, systematic and effective teaching of sounds and letters. At times teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils, which temporarily constrains their progress. The pace of activities sometimes slows when, for example, children repeat activities they have already covered. The dedicated outdoor area is temporarily inaccessible, due to redevelopment, so that it was not possible to judge the full impact of this provision. However, planning indicates that, under normal circumstances, children access outdoor learning opportunities frequently and these satisfactorily complement indoor learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory in most respects. However, the monitoring and recording of children's progress have not, recently, been sufficiently thorough. This is having an impact on the planning of activities and the progress children make.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Although only a small number of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, almost all who did so are very pleased with the school. Most written comments were positive, for example, 'a caring and nurturing environment, in which children enjoy their learning.' Typically, parents and carers appreciate the commitment of the staff, the exciting curriculum and the care their children receive. The few less affirmative comments, raised only by one parent or carer in each case, included concerns around road safety issues, communication with parents and the balance of class time between topic work and basic skills activities. The team considered all points carefully. The school is familiar with the issues raised and is committed to improving matters where it can. Overall, the consensus suggests that this is a very caring school where pupils are well supported. Inspection findings firmly endorse parents and carers' positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Peter Gladwin Primary 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	54	17	41	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	59	16	29	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	41	22	54	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	51	16	39	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	66	13	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	59	16	39	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	54	19	46	0	0	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)	10	24	22	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	39	21	51	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	44	18	44	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	29	23	56	3	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	51	18	44	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	59	15	37	1	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



16 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Peter Gladwin Primary School, Portslade BN41 2PA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and spending time in your lessons. We found that yours is a good school which has improved a great deal in recent years.

These are our main findings.

- You behave exceptionally well and work hard.
- Standards are above average in Year 6 and have risen considerably in the last four years. Most of you make good progress overall, but outstanding progress in Year 6.
- Teachers work hard and support you well in your learning.
- While children in Reception make satisfactory progress overall, they make good progress in developing their knowledge of letters and sounds.
- The school makes sure that you are cared for well.
- You conduct yourselves very safely and have an excellent understanding of how important it is to eat healthily.
- The curriculum is good, with some really imaginative aspects. You go on a wide range of visits and are able to take part in lots of clubs.
- Those of you who find learning difficult get lots of extra help.
- The adults who lead the school work very hard and set high standards.

We are asking the school to make the following changes so that you do even better:

- encourage all pupils to attend school as regularly as possible
- make sure that teachers give you more written guidance when they mark your work and that they make better use of your individual targets in English and mathematics, so that you make the best possible progress
- ensure that they carefully check children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage to make sure that they plan activities that are just right.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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