

# Saltdean Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114479
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brighton and Hove
<b>Inspection number</b>	338375
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacque Buttriss

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Katherine Eastland
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Goodman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 January 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent looking at learning. Seventeen lessons were observed, which included all the teachers in the school on the days of the inspection. Meetings were held with leaders, governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide variety of documents and other evidence, including the school's self-evaluation form, the school improvement plan, a range of pupils' attainment and progress data, safeguarding documents, curriculum planning, lesson plans and pupils' work in their books.

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

- The current attainment and progress of younger pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and what reasons there may be for what appears to be a degree of underachievement amongst this age group.
- The attainment on entry to the school to help ascertain the progress of pupils in the two Reception classes.
- The accuracy of the school's self-evaluation.
- The impact of new members of the leadership team and new teachers on pupils' achievement and well-being.

## Information about the school

Saltdean is a larger than average primary school, set within a residential estate on the edge of Brighton. The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds and there are very few whose first language is not English. The proportion of pupils who take free school meals is lower than in most schools. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a little above average, with the majority of these having dyslexia or communication difficulties. There is a daily breakfast club run by the school. Several new teachers have joined the school this year and there are new members of the senior leadership team.

Over the past two years, the school has gained many awards, including Investors in People and the Basic Skills Award.

**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 good school. It gives its pupils a good education and cares for them well. As one parent put it, reflecting the views of many, 'All my children have flourished at Saltdean Primary School.' The great majority of pupils make good progress which accelerates as they go through the school, so that by the time they leave they attain above average standards. However, a few of the younger pupils of middle and upper abilities are not sufficiently challenged which results in some underachievement.

Pupils respond well to the good teaching and the wide variety of learning opportunities provided by the stimulating curriculum. 'Teachers make lessons fun,' commented one pupil. A great strength of the school are its outstanding partnerships with many organisations, professionals and schools, all of which provide excellent involvement and experiences in the wider world, both locally and in a very different area of the UK. Assessment is good overall, but in the Reception classes, the continuous assessment is not sufficiently referenced to the expected stages of progress for this age group.

Pupils of all ages demonstrate highly positive attitudes to their learning. As the parent of a Reception child wrote, 'My daughter has settled in quickly and now runs to school every day!' Pupils gain well in all areas of their personal development and this is reflected in the wide array of awards gained by the school. Behaviour is good and well managed. The school provides a safe, caring environment for its pupils and their families. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported and as a result, they make good progress in all age-groups.

The school is well led and the self-evaluation form is clear in its understanding of where the school is, though cautious in its grade judgements. The good improvements made in the use of assessment and in pupils' writing skills, together with the rising attendance figures and the strength of the current leadership team, demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Increase the progress and raise the attainment of some younger pupils of middle and higher ability by:
  - ensuring greater challenge and pace in lessons
  - shortening the introductions to lessons to allow more time for active learning.
- Ensure that assessment in the Reception classes becomes more focused so that it links with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and gives a clearer picture of how well individual children are doing.

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## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Children enter the Reception classes with skills at expected levels. Attainment dips at the end of Year 2, then rises again so that pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with above average attainment. Progress is good overall and accelerates as pupils move through the school, so that in Years 5 and 6 most pupils make excellent progress. However, a few younger able learners told inspectors that they would like greater challenge, as one said: 'I'd like more hard work.'

'I feel very safe at school,' said one pupil and this was echoed by many others. Pupils have a good awareness of how to adopt healthy lifestyles, but they are honest enough to admit that they do not always choose the healthiest options at mealtimes! Pupils demonstrate consideration for each other and behave well. 'Nobody is ever bullied in my school and if they are, the teachers always sort it out,' was the confident judgement of one older pupil. Pupils enjoy all the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities in school, such as sports captains, as well as active involvement in improving community facilities, for example the group of older pupils who sit on the new local playground's development committee. Pupils also take part in many local activities, such as the pen-pal links with residents of a local care home, including a recent exchange of childhood memories of playing in the snow.

Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as seen in their correspondence with pupils attending a multi-cultural inner-city school. They acquire a good range of collaborative and independent learning skills which prepare them well for the next stages in their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<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.

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b>	
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>2</b>
	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good across the school, and three outstanding lessons were observed by inspectors in the upper year groups. Many lessons are characterised by the setting of stimulating tasks which engage and motivate learners well. 'We do lots of exciting activities,' said an older pupil. Indeed, in Year 6, pupils expressed great enthusiasm for their work on archaic and poetic language, with some of the more able pupils reaching exceptionally high standards in their imaginative writing. Teachers involve pupils in setting their individual targets. Most were able to tell inspectors their learning targets and they are well motivated to meet them. 'I love my targets!' exclaimed a younger pupil. Assessment is used well to help teachers meet the needs of pupils and most pupils say they know how well they are doing. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is often very constructive in helping pupils know how to improve their work, but this is not consistent in every class.

The curriculum is well planned and provides good enrichment through a wide variety of lunchtime and after-school activities, trips and themed weeks, such as the maths and science week during the inspection. However, some of the exciting themed science activities in the younger classes lacked sufficiently focused organisation so that learning opportunities were missed. Inspectors enjoyed a taster of the Arabic club and were sorry to miss the 'maths magician' at the end of the week!

Care, guidance and support is good throughout the school. A parent told inspectors: 'There is a fantastic breakfast club.' Vulnerable pupils and their families are very well supported, as demonstrated in the comment of one parent, following a family crisis: 'The school have been fantastic in their support. Massive thanks to all staff.' A pupil commented: 'Saltdean school is good at dealing with all kinds of children.' Indeed, inspectors agree that 'staff exhibit a genuine interest in every child,' as one parent put it. Pupils and staff of all cultures and disabilities are fully included in the life of the school and this contributes to the evidently high staff morale. Most groups of pupils are well supported, but the needs of some of the more able younger pupils are not fully met so that they do not achieve as highly as they could.

*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	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The clear vision and direction of the head teacher is fully shared by the dynamic leadership team and together they drive forward the school's improvement and embed ambition in the activities of all staff and pupils. The good leadership of teaching and learning ensures that all aspects are regularly monitored and reviewed. All leaders have a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development. The new and very enthusiastic chair of governors has revitalised the governing body to provide good support and challenge for the school. The school provides good opportunities to extend the involvement of parents and carers. For example, as one parent explained: 'Of particular note are the courses that the school runs to teach parents how to support their children's learning at home ' these have been invaluable.'

The school's close and active links with many other schools and organisations, such as a premier league football club, provide popular opportunities for pupils to enrich their learning and well-being. Community cohesion is good, with particular strengths in school, local and national cohesion. For example, as well as pen-pal links with pupils at a Dulwich school, Year 6 pupils visit each other's schools in the summer and undertake excellent learning projects based in each other's local areas. The school is now endeavouring to establish links with schools in other parts of the world.

Good equality of opportunity ensures good support of vulnerable pupils and leads to the good progress made by the large majority of pupils. The school's safeguarding procedures are good, as shown, for example, in the quantity and quality of risk assessments, and the awareness shown by children in the Reception classes reminding each other of the need to play safely when in their outside area.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<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>2</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>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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

Most children come into the Reception classes with skills in line with expectations. In recent years, progress has been satisfactory, but has accelerated since the beginning of this year so that these children now achieve well and have a good start to their school lives. Reception teachers and support staff work as a strong team to help children settle in well. As one parent said: 'I cannot praise the Reception staff enough ' they made my child's transition from nursery to school an easy and happy one.' The caring and dedicated staff help children to gain confidence and feel secure. Good teaching and a stimulating variety of tasks and activities motivate children to enjoy their learning and develop a good degree of independence at an early stage. Children make good use of their outdoor area, but it is not yet sufficiently developed for use across all the areas of learning.

The new leader's passion for improvement enthuses the team and ensures that planning provides a good framework for learning. Adults do a lot of observations to assess children's skills, but this assessment is not always used to gauge their progress against age-related measures. Parents praise the quality of provision in the Reception classes, as reflected in the comment: 'My child's early experiences at Saltdean have been very positive. I have found all staff to be very caring and particularly nurturing.'

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The large majority of parents are full of praise for the dedication and professionalism of all the staff and their good communications. Echoing the views of most, one parent commented: 'We are very impressed with the teaching and learning at Saltdean Primary.' Some parents describe individual concerns, not echoed by others. There were two common concerns expressed by a few parents each. The first relates to pupils coming out of the school at the end of the school day with regard to drivers using the



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nearby store's car-park. Unfortunately, this is beyond the school's control but staff are aware of the problem and are vigilant to ensure pupils know how to stay safe. The second concern is whether able pupils are sufficiently challenged. Inspectors investigated this fully and their conclusion is that able pupils in every year group but one are sufficiently challenged and consequently achieve well, especially in Years 5 and 6. Typical comments included: 'There is an amazing community spirit' and 'I cannot thank the school enough for all the care and support they have given my child and us as a family.'

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Saltdean 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 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 431 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	49	59	45	6	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	58	46	35	6	5	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	27	76	59	13	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	35	64	49	13	10	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	50	39	66	51	8	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	34	74	57	8	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	35	73	56	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)	46	35	58	45	8	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	35	65	50	9	6	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	32	62	48	9	6	8	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	35	62	48	7	6	7	6
The school is led and managed effectively	48	37	64	50	7	6	6	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	43	58	45	6	5	4	3

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"> <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.**



12 February 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Saltdean Primary School, Brighton BN2 8HB

Thank you for being so friendly, polite and helpful when we came to inspect your school. We very much enjoyed talking with you and reading the comments some of you wrote on your questionnaires. Yours is a good school.

These are the things that we especially like about your school:

- Many of you have written to tell us how much you like coming to school and that you enjoy your learning.
- Children in the Reception classes have a good start to their school lives.
- Most of you work hard, make good progress and achieve well.
- We agree with you that the teachers and support staff work hard to provide you with 'fun' lessons and to help you learn lots of new things.
- You behave well in school. Well done!
- You are rightly proud of your school and of your work in the community.
- The headteacher and her team lead your school well.
- Your school has a variety of excellent partnerships to help you extend your learning, such as the link with a school in Dulwich, which some of you visit to learn about the pupils there and to take part in a project about the area.

These are the things your school could do to improve:

- Help some of the younger pupils to achieve better by making sure lessons are challenging for those who can work harder and to plan more time for pupils to be involved in active learning.
- Link the ways teachers and assistants assess Reception children's progress to the stages described in the guidelines for this age group

You can help the school by keeping up your good work and continuing to enjoy your lessons. I would like to wish you all lots of success in your future learning.

Yours sincerely

Jacquie Buttriss

Lead Inspector

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