

# Robsack Wood Community Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114483
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	338376
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Marshall

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>	0–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	E Simpson
<b>Headteacher</b>	J Benwell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Whatlington Way St Leonards-on-Sea East Sussex TN38 9TE
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<b>Email address</b>	head@robsack-wood.e-sussex.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed the school's work, spending about 80% of the time looking at pupils' learning. Inspectors visited 26 lessons, observing 15 teachers. Discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers, support and administrative staff, governors, parents and pupils. The school's documentation was scrutinised carefully and included school improvement plans, the tracking of pupils' progress, staff and governor meeting records and safeguarding documentation. In addition, 105 questionnaires from parents and carers, 24 staff questionnaires and 76 pupil questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the attainment and progress of the current pupils and the planning of modifications to raise achievement, especially in writing and mathematics
- pupils' personal development and the effectiveness of the school's measures to enhance their social and moral development
- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for assessing and analysing progress, and how well pupils are involved in assessing their own learning
- in the light of the changes throughout the school and nursery, the effectiveness of the leaders and managers at all levels, including the governors, to enable continuity and improvement.

## Information about the school

Robsack Wood is a larger than average school. A well above average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in school is much higher than the national average. The wide range of special needs includes academic, behavioural, language and emotional difficulties. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is well below average.

In 2006, the school opened its Registered Nursery as part of the Greater Hollington Children Centre. The Nursery is part of the school and is led and managed by the headteacher and the governing body. Also in 2006, the school opened its Registered Childcare Provision in the form of Extended Schools. All of this provision was evaluated as part of this inspection.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

Robsack Wood is an outstanding school. This is due to the overall effectiveness of the management, the outstanding quality of pastoral care and the excellent progress pupils make. The headteacher, senior leaders and governors provide highly effective leadership. They know the school's strengths very well and what needs to be refined further. Their track record of employing initiatives to enthuse pupils and thus enable them all to progress extremely well shows that it has an excellent capacity to continue improving. There are very rewarding partnerships with the community, and with other schools and organisations. As one parent wrote, 'Robsack Community Primary School is led by a visionary headteacher who always has amazing ideas and at the same time gets the academic results for the children.'

Pupils' personal development and their wider educational outcomes are excellent which helps their all-round achievement, both academic and personal. Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic learners. Pupils enter the school with skills and understanding that vary but are generally very low when compared with expectations for their age. Very effective organisation and careful assessments enable children to make excellent progress immediately in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This outstanding start is built upon very well so that by the time they leave the school, pupils' standards are in line with expectations for their age.

The overall quality of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are planned to make sure that all pupils enjoy learning. Teachers' planning is thorough and is based on the use of careful assessments. The outstanding curriculum is enhanced by a range of additional activities, visits and visitors. The school is led and managed exceptionally well and there is a close partnership between the school and its governing body.

The school does much to promote its place in the local community and works extremely effectively with many local organisations, playgroups and local businesses. The contribution of the Friends of the School Association is exceptional, and is greatly appreciated by all involved. The audit of community cohesion, undertaken by the outstanding governing body, is underpinned by a careful analysis of these factors in the school's context. While these links with the local community are excellent, pupils' awareness of, and preparation for, living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom are not developed as well.

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

- Enhance pupils' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse United Kingdom and extend the school's provision for community cohesion by:

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- instigating the findings of their recent careful analysis
- implementing their plans to link with schools in other localities.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Observations of lessons during the inspection confirmed that, throughout the school, all groups of pupils make excellent progress, regardless of their background or ability. It was impressive to observe, in all lessons, impeccable behaviour and the excellent skills pupils have acquired in working either independently or with their classmates. This helps to create the high-quality climate for learning that was evident in all classes. The outstanding progress in the Key Stage 1 classes is firmly based on meeting individual pupils' needs and sharing best practice. This is built on exceptionally well in the older classes. For example, the pupils' keenness to succeed was clear in the excellent Year 5 English lessons, where all pupils wanted to read out and share what they had written, and where they applauded and valued each other's attempts. National test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2009 were broadly average and achieved the school's carefully formulated and challenging targets representing excellent progress from pupils' low starting point. By ensuring excellent support from very well qualified teaching assistants wherever it is needed, the many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the smaller numbers from minority ethnic groups make excellent progress.

Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. This was demonstrated admirably in two assemblies on the 'being friends'. Such experiences make a significant contribution to pupils' excellent standards in speaking and listening, their high self-esteem and overall very impressive spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Pupils' consistently show high standards of behaviour and social skills. Their knowledge of how to keep safe is very impressive. They are given an excellent grounding in good citizenship and in contributing to the community. For example, appointments as members of the school council, or the 'Eco Council', are highly valued. The school council has been responsible for the promotion of better sporting activities. These efforts, and the healthy schools initiative, have ensured that pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. The pupils' very high level of enjoyment in their learning is reflected in their improved rates of attendance and outstanding punctuality. As one pupil wrote to the inspection team, 'If you came to this school you would enjoy it a lot as the lessons are made exciting, and the teachers will sort something out if you are sad.'

*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	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<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>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The teachers consistently show excellent skills in managing their pupils and in providing clear explanations about new ideas. In all lessons observed, pupils were extremely well motivated by the ideas and resources presented and were very keen to please their teachers and other adults. Academic monitoring and guidance are very effective and marking is carried out with the pupils to give them clear and immediate pointers about what they need to do to improve their work.

The consistent and very careful planning is implemented with enthusiasm and care. This was evident in many outstanding lessons, such as those in English in Year 5 and in science in Year 6, and consistently in other year groups. No opportunity to explore pupils' previous learning was missed and very good links were made with other subjects. The imaginative use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards, inspired pupils to try their hardest. At the top end of the school, teachers cultivate pupils' skills in reading and comprehension, so pupils understand tasks quickly. They also encourage high levels of speaking and listening so discussions in lessons are enabling all pupils' confidence in using language to grow. As well as opportunities to talk and exchange ideas, teachers make sure that pupils are given occasions to listen with care and learn to focus.

Assessment information is used rigorously to ensure that not only the least able and the most vulnerable pupils make outstanding progress, but the more-able pupils are consistently well challenged. Pupils are very familiar with their learning targets and develop skills of self-assessment. They are proud to discuss 'team points' earned for either good work or effort and are able to explain how teachers' comments in their books have helped them further improve their work.

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The Extended Schools Team is led and managed excellently. The very varied programme of activities to support the needs of the community is extremely effective and much appreciated. Parents and carers talk enthusiastically about such activities as the walking bus, the many after-school clubs, transition projects, cycling proficiency, Sussex Police Academy, fire services, Let's Get Cooking, and family activity days in conjunction with the Excellence Cluster. The latest scheme to inspire the pupils, Forest Schools Outdoor Learning, has led to some amazing stories being created through the collection and display of items hanging as mobiles in the classroom.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<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?**

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. This, in partnership with the very effective assistant headteachers, ensures that complacency is not tolerated. Teamwork is excellent and the administrative team and site manager are assets to the school and are very much appreciated by all concerned. Staff are focused relentlessly on further improvement and work brilliantly together. The school knows itself very well and sets the right targets to become even better. All subject leaders and governors are closely involved in monitoring the school's work, which they do rigorously and with tremendous enthusiasm. Documentation is impressive and the evaluation of the school's work is honest and accurate. The outstanding governing body is fully involved in this process, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where necessary. They hold the school to account in a challenging but supportive manner.

Excellent attention is paid by managers at all levels to ensure the highest quality of safety and care for the pupils. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are firmly in place and carried out thoroughly and regularly. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place to be. The senior managers, supported well by all staff, are also effective in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination for all pupils across all aspects of the school's work, demonstrated by their action to reduce any gender differences in attainment.

The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. A plan and clear actions are in place for promoting pupils' understanding from local and global perspectives. With this in mind, although there are already very good links with a school in another and different area, they have identified that pupils could be further prepared

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for living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom and leaders and staff are looking forward to promoting this by further widening links with other schools. In correctly focusing on the need to improve provision for community cohesion at a national level, the school is developing plans to forge links with schools in places where pupils' lives are very different. These have not yet been fully implemented.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</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>1</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>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make an excellent start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. The huge level of commitment and care shown by all staff is evident in the way that although the children come into the school from many different settings and at different times, they all settle into the school so well and immediately begin to learn. As one parent wrote, 'We are very happy with the nursery ' in terms of facilities and equipment, but particularly the staff. They are very caring and supportive of the children's individual needs and create a welcoming and friendly environment.'

The nursery and childcare facilities are outstanding and especially well led and managed. All requirements for registration are rigorously met. The school works with a wide network of professionals ' this includes a partnership with Sure Start, Children's Services and community groups. The children are exceptionally well cared for and all safeguarding elements are rigorously applied. When children join the setting they are quickly assessed and a rich variety of activities are planned around their individual needs. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn and develop and groups are organised carefully. Key persons are responsible for planning enjoyable and interesting activities for them. Resources are plentiful and there is an excellent choice of

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large and small toys for developing manual skills. As the children get older, there is a good mix of adult-led activities and free choice, children moving to where their interest takes them. Those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully supported by key persons who help them to become more confident in their own abilities.

Throughout the whole setting, photographic evidence is used effectively to record exciting events and children's excellent achievements. Snack time is popular and provides a harmonious social occasion. Staff are well trained in health and hygiene requirements and ensure these are observed. Staff work especially hard to give the children a real sense of determining their own way forward, which guarantees their full involvement in all activities.

In the Reception classes, children make rapid progress and achieve highly, especially in their language, and social and emotional development. Adults have high expectations, provide very clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships. The enthusiasm and enjoyment of the children as they pursued the giant to his large, child-made, castle up the beanstalk were infectious. The classrooms are all stimulating and resources are used exceptionally well as children move from one to another. The outstanding outside areas provide the same exciting level of challenge and stimulation, especially for the more capable children. Staff get to know the children thoroughly. They make a careful note of all responses and feedback. The information collected about children is used effectively to ensure that the least able and most vulnerable settle and learn well.

*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 overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team are very happy with the school. They consider that the school has a dedicated team of staff and the headteacher leads and manages the school very well. They agree that the school has a very warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and that their children make good progress. They were particularly impressed with the pastoral support their children receive. Inspectors fully endorse these views. A small number of criticisms were offered constructively. There were no particular trends in the very few negative comments received by inspectors. While retaining respondents' unanimity, these were discussed with the headteacher.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robsack Wood Community Primary School and Nursery 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 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 241 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	57	45	42	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	66	61	40	37	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	55	51	50	46	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	50	47	44	6	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	63	58	43	40	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	56	43	40	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	65	34	32	3	3	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)	49	45	45	42	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	55	40	37	6	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	40	51	47	10	9	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	49	46	43	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	62	57	42	39	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	61	39	36	1	1	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"> <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.**



5 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robsack Wood Community Primary School and Nursery, St Leonards-on-Sea TN38 9TE

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to the school recently. We did enjoy our visit. Yours is an outstanding school with many strengths, and we agree with what you told us ' it is a really fun place to learn. Here is a list of some of the things that we think are really good.

- The school looks after you very carefully and you all achieve extremely well by the time you leave the school.
- You behave excellently, get along with each other and feel very safe in school.
- You all have very good ideas about how to make things better and you have an excellent understanding of how to live healthily.
- You find lessons interesting and really enjoy school.
- There are plenty of exciting things for you to do, in school, on visits and in clubs.
- The headteacher and staff manage the school extremely well.

Even in excellent schools, some things can be made better. I have asked the teachers to make sure that:

- you are given the chance to look at and understand about how children and adults live in places in the United Kingdom that are different from where you live.

You must continue to listen carefully and take note of what the teachers say. Then you will all continue to make excellent progress in your learning.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall

Lead Inspector

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