

Rudyard Kipling Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114486
Local Authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	338378
Inspection dates	8–9 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Bill James

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Harris
Headteacher	Jenny Aldridge
Date of previous school inspection	0 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons. Meetings were held with staff, governors and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, checked arrangements for safeguarding and looked at a range of documentation, including planning for school improvement, the school's records of monitoring and evaluation, and data on pupils' progress. Sixty-nine questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- the quality of assessment in the school and what impact this is having on the outcomes for pupils
- the effectiveness of monitoring by senior leaders in raising achievement and standards
- how well provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children meets their needs.

Information about the school

This large school is located on the outskirts of Brighton but draws its pupils mainly from the local mixed housing estate. Most pupils are of White British heritage and an above average number are entitled to free school meals. The school houses a special unit for pupils within the autistic spectrum. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. There is a nursery as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision, and a registered day-care provider is based in the school grounds, although this provision was inspected separately. In recent years, the school has experienced falling numbers and has had to reorganise some classes into mixed age groups as a result.

The headteacher took up post in September 2007 and a new senior leadership team was established in September 2009. The school holds several awards, including Activemark, and Healthy School status.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Rudyard Kipling Primary is a satisfactory school. Parents are overwhelmingly clear that their children enjoy school and are safe and happy, reflecting the good quality of care, guidance and support provided. Relationships with pupils are strong throughout the school and pupils trust the adults who work with them. As a result, their personal development is good, and they speak confidently about how they can keep themselves safe both in and out of school. Behaviour is good and pupils want to learn.

Satisfactory teaching ensures that most pupils in the school make satisfactory progress. There are particular strengths in Years 5 and 6, where teachers are leading the way through good use of assessments to produce challenging targets. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and staff work hard to ensure that pupils in the autistic unit make good progress. However, progress is not consistent across all year groups and, as a result, some pupils are not doing as well as they could. This is often the case with the more able pupils, even though their overall progress is still satisfactory. In some lessons, not enough use is made of assessment information to ensure that work set is adjusted for different ability groups, particularly to provide greater challenge for the more able in the important subjects of English and mathematics. The curriculum is also satisfactory but developing well. Pupils' learning opportunities are often grouped within topics, with a focus on writing to try and address current weaknesses. The development of information and communication technology is a current focus so that pupils can make better use of their key skills across the curriculum.

The headteacher and the new leadership team are working hard to make improvements. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory and the senior leaders have a clear understanding of what they need to do to make the school better, including the development of their monitoring role to ensure the very best outcomes for pupils. Governors work hard to support the school and are becoming more able to challenge it. They recognise the importance of improving standards. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of all pupils by:
 - closely monitoring teaching to ensure that all teaching mirrors the best practice that currently exists in the school
 - ensuring that the more able pupils are provided with more challenging work in

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order to increase the number of pupils gaining the higher National Curriculum levels.

- Strengthen the effectiveness of the use of assessment by:
 - more effectively monitoring how well all teachers are using assessment to inform future learning
 - undertaking more frequent checking of pupils' work in English and mathematics to ensure that concerns are effectively followed up
 - setting challenging targets for all pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Lesson observations carried out during the inspection confirmed that pupils' learning and progress are inconsistent and uneven across different age groups, although it is satisfactory overall. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average from a low base on entry to the school, but this reflects better provision in Years 5 and 6 rather than good overall progress. Progress in reading is better than other aspects as a result of a whole-school focus on the development of reading skills. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good because targeted interventions make sure that they systematically complete small steps for improvement. In tests, not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics. The school recognises this and has begun to implement higher targets for pupils' attainment and more focused challenge for the most able pupils. The progress made by the small number of pupils learning English as an additional language is satisfactory. They are well integrated into their classes and readily participate in group activities with their peers.

Pupils are very clear about expectations of behaviour and, as a result, good behaviour in lessons and on the playground was a feature of the inspection. There are a number of schemes in the school with direct pupil involvement to encourage them to be active and stay healthy, including a very well-supported early morning running club. Pupils regularly raise money for charities. Attendance, although below average, is improving and the school has undertaken a number of initiatives to help maintain this improvement. When asked, pupils said that they enjoy school and learning and feel safe

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers know the pupils well and the majority of lessons are well planned. Teachers display good subject knowledge and lessons are generally delivered with good pace, but occasionally pupils are expected to sit for too long in introductory sessions. Teachers and support staff work very well together with a clear focus on learning. However, the quality of teaching is too variable. The procedures for assessment are strong but the use of assessment information is not yet consistent enough.

In Years 5 and 6, targets are having a very positive effect on pupils' learning and progress. The use of individual targets as a way of improving the learning of pupils is relatively new; however, when they are used effectively, pupils know how to improve their work and hence make better progress. The senior leaders recognise the importance of a consistent approach throughout the school in order to raise expectations of pupils' levels of work. At present, pupils' work in English and mathematics is not checked frequently enough and as a result sometimes issues arising are not followed up effectively. In most lessons, work is matched to the ability of the pupils, but this is not always the case, especially for more able pupils.

The whole-school focus on the 'Deep Learning Project' is just one way in which the school is trying to improve the literacy skills of the pupils through an exciting context for learning. Topics are chosen to offer pupils a range of opportunities to write and the pupils are responding with some good examples, as seen during the inspection. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' personal and social development, but does not provide enough planned opportunities for pupils to work independently. A recently refurbished computer suite is allowing pupils to have a full

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range of opportunities to develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT). This is in its infancy and ICT is not yet used to support learning across a range of subjects. The curriculum offered contains good opportunities to enrich learning and results in high participation in extra-curricular clubs. The good physical education curriculum is popular with the children, as evidenced by their positive responses when asked about what subjects they enjoy.

Pupils who are vulnerable or have specific needs are identified effectively and they are supported and encouraged well. Good links are maintained with parents, particularly through the efforts of the inclusion team and there is close collaboration with other outside specialists, when required, to provide further support for pupils and their families. The wide range of emotional needs, especially of pupils in the autistic spectrum unit, are very sensitively met by staff at all levels. This partnership approach is something that is appreciated by parents. This is typified by one parent who said, 'My child is in the autistic spectrum unit, there is a high level of support from experienced staff who are extremely dedicated and help both my child and me.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team has begun to put into place appropriate strategies for improvement that reflect the school's aspirations; however, not all aspects of these are fully effective.. This is particularly true of teaching, where the pace of improvements is being constrained by the lack of frequent monitoring and follow-up of identified issues. The analysis of data by teachers to inform planning for the next stage in the pupils' learning is as yet underdeveloped. Subject leaders have recently begun to take a lead in monitoring their subjects and this is an emerging strength. The governing body has undergone several changes over the past year and does not, as yet, have a full complement of governors. However, in close consultation with the headteacher, governors ensure that all safeguarding procedures are in place and the environment is kept safe.

The tolerant and supportive attitudes of pupils are evidence of the appropriate strategies the school has in place to promote equality and tackle discrimination. The school has strong links with the local community, including a very strong link with the local sports partnership, and a range of agencies that can offer additional support to individual pupils where appropriate. However, links with the wider UK and global communities are

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limited and the school recognises this as a weaker aspect of its promotion of community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge, skills and abilities that are well below the levels expected for their age, especially in reading, writing and creative development, and make satisfactory progress. Children do well in their personal and social development as a result of the good provision, which builds on children's individual social skills and offers challenge and opportunities in activities that promote emotional well-being. Teachers are knowledgeable and work well with the support staff to create a warm atmosphere where children are secure. At present, the children are fairly dependent on their teachers for direction, but this has been recognised and there are plans to provide opportunities for more independent learning. Good use of the outside area ensures that children have opportunities to choose activities to support and develop their learning further. Teachers manage behaviour confidently, setting clear standards of acceptable conduct. An array of opportunities encourage parents to get involved and support their children's learning. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has worked hard to develop her knowledge and ensure that the provision is good, but these changes and improvements have not had sufficient time to impact significantly on all the outcomes for children, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Consequently, leadership is judged to be satisfactory. Planned improvements include taking into account the emerging views of children when planning activities, greater independence and a continued focus on the development of early literacy skills.

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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	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents expressed a good level of satisfaction with the school overall. Written comments were generally very positive but some did question the amount of progress their children were making. Inspectors judged that progress was satisfactory. Several parents commented favourably on how happy they were with the school. A small number of parents asked for clarification of the procedures the school uses to report accidents to parents. This has been brought to the attention of the school and staff will take appropriate action to make sure that parents are fully informed. A small minority of parents questioned the quality of behaviour management and how well their views are taken into account. Inspectors found that behaviour in lessons and on the playground was good and that the school had appropriate mechanisms for gaining the views of parents. Both these issues were shared with the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rudyard Kipling 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 320 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	57	28	41	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	42	37	54	3	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	30	37	53	7	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	33	28	41	9	13	4	6
The teaching is good at this school	28	41	30	44	9	13	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	35	35	51	4	6	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	30	36	52	6	9	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)	23	33	30	44	7	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	32	35	51	6	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	26	30	44	11	16	8	12
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	30	26	38	10	15	5	7
The school is led and managed effectively	23	33	30	44	4	6	5	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	46	28	41	4	6	4	1

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.



12 October 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Rudyard Kipling Primary School, Brighton, BN2 6RH

Thank you for making us welcome in your school and for talking to us so openly when we visited recently. We really enjoyed joining you in lessons and seeing your work. We think your school gives you a satisfactory education, which means that it does some things well but that other things could be improved. Here are some of the things we liked most.

- Children in Nursery and Reception have good opportunities to learn new things.
- Your behaviour is good and you told us how much you like coming to school.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and exercise in order to stay healthy.
- While teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, we saw some good teaching and were pleased to see that you work hard in lessons.
- All the adults, including the governors, are trying hard to improve your school.

We have asked your school to do some things so that it gets even better:

- improve the way teachers use their information about your progress to make sure that activities are always interesting and at the right level,, especially so that those of you who can learn faster reach higher standards
- make sure that all lessons are as good as they can possibly be so you have work that always challenges you to progress well, whatever your ability
- check that all of you have targets in English and mathematics and check that you know what they are and how you are going to reach them.

We hope that you will continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school. Your school council works well, so if you have a good idea on how to make Rudyard Kipling Primary School even better, why not tell them and they can bring it to the attention of the headteacher?

Yours faithfully

Bill James

Lead inspector

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