

Lancastrian Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125822
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340843
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Wheeler
Headteacher	Amanda Hackney
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2007
School address	Orchard Gardens Chichester PO19 1DG
Telephone number	01243 782818
Fax number	01243 530645
Email address	office@lancastrian.w-sussex.sch.uk

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2010
Inspection number	340843

**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision****Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed six teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils and observed the school's work, including samples of pupils' work in writing and mathematics. They scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's records of pupils' assessments, subject leaders' files, reports of visits by local authority representatives and minutes of the governing body. Questionnaires from 53 parents and 18 members of staff were analysed.

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

- the quality of boys' learning and progress in reading and writing
 - how well teaching promotes effective learning for all groups of pupils
 - how successfully the school is monitoring attendance and working with parents to improve attendance level
- how effectively leaders and managers are evaluating the school's provision, identifying priorities and demonstrating shared ambition and drive to make any necessary improvements.

Information about the school

The school is located in Chichester and mainly serves families who live in the city centre. The school has had three headteachers, including an acting headteacher, since the beginning of the academic year. At the time of the inspection the new substantive headteacher had been in post for four weeks.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The school has a class of Year 1 pupils and the remaining two are mixed Years 1 and 2 classes. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has increased over the last two years to slightly above average. The nature of their needs varies but most have learning, behavioural or emotional and social needs. The school has gained the Eco Schools Bronze award this year and holds Investors in Health. Two out-of-school clubs take place daily during term time, the Sunrise and Sunset Clubs, both of which are managed by the governing body.

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

Lancastrian Infants' School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. During their time in the school pupils build appropriately on their skills and knowledge from when they start school. The teaching is satisfactory and this leads to satisfactory achievement for pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has some good features. Pupils are well cared for and given good support. They feel very safe in school and know who they can go to for help. Keeping healthy and active is clearly important to them and many pupils demonstrate this by eating fruit, participating in after-school clubs and by enjoying using the range of play equipment at playtimes. The school has a good partnership with other agencies and with its parent community. A very large majority of parents report they are happy with their children's experience of school.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they have to help around the school. Behaviour is good overall. Occasionally, a few, mostly boys, become over-boisterous. In lessons, this often stems from weaker aspects of teaching, when not enough attention is paid to learning in a varied, interesting and lively way. When pupils have been sitting listening for too long, they become over-excited once the lesson stops, and they need to let off steam. In contrast, some teaching is good, tasks are planned well to cater for the range of attainment in the class, pupils are clear about what they are learning and, as a result, they remain motivated and involved. A key reason for teaching being satisfactory rather than good is that the teachers' planning and approaches do not focus consistently on what pupils from different groups need to learn, based on ongoing assessments of what they can or cannot already do.

Governors and staff report that the school has gone through a difficult and sad time over the last two years, due to circumstances beyond anyone's control. However, there is a real sense of a new beginning with the new headteacher. She has already gained an astute awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has started to establish her vision, with pupils' learning at the heart. This is shared by governors who have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. While some subject leaders have taken steps to monitor provision in their subjects and track pupils' progress, others have had less of an impact. Some key senior leaders have not been sufficiently involved in identifying, promoting and leading improvements. The headteacher has considerable experience of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and she has worked with the two teachers in Reception to bring about necessary changes in a relatively short period. Provision for these children is satisfactory. However, teachers' plans are not routinely sharply focused on the learning and development needs of

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individual children and there is some inconsistency in how well adults are promoting effective learning for individuals and small groups. Joint observations carried out during the inspection demonstrated that the headteacher had an accurate view of teaching and pupils' learning in the lessons observed. The changes already instigated, including better arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are leading to better provision. This demonstrates the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers focus on pupils' learning so that good learning for all groups of pupils is a common feature of lessons, by:
 - being clear about the learning outcomes for the range of attainment represented within the class
 - using marking and assessments consistently well to guide plans for future work
 - using a wide range of strategies to engage and motivate all pupils and to monitor and promote their learning and progress within lessons
 - deploying teaching assistants effectively and sharing planning intentions with them so that they are clear of their roles.
- Improve the quality and impact of the senior leadership team, by:
 - ensuring all senior leaders contribute effectively to monitoring, promoting and leading improvements that have a clear impact on pupils' achievement and standards
 - making sure that pupils' learning and progress are an integral part of all evaluation activities
 - using the assessment and tracking systems more effectively to monitor the progress of individuals and groups
 - clarifying the roles and responsibilities for the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Improve the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
 - embedding the new arrangements for using the outside area to have maximum impact on children's learning and development
 - ensuring the planning for adult-led and child-initiated activities is more explicit about learning and development opportunities
 - enhancing the learning environment to provide more opportunities for children to develop independence.

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

The extent to which pupils make progress and enjoy learning is dependent upon how well the lesson is planned and structured and the strategies teachers draw upon to

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engage all pupils. Pupils show interest in many lessons, particularly when they are involved more actively and are encouraged to participate. They enjoy working in pairs and small groups, when given the opportunity to do so, and cooperate well. Their learning and interest slow when they have to sit and listen for extended periods and when the teachers' questions are not phrased and targeted sufficiently to involve more of the class than individuals. Pupils' personal development and social skills are good. Their enthusiasm for learning and exploring is evident in lessons that motivate and interest them and in the many clubs that are organised for them. They also participate enthusiastically during the out-of-school clubs that the school organises. These skills and attitudes are important for their next steps in education and their future lives. Pupils' attendance has been below average over recent years and a group of pupils have had attendance levels below 90%. This is being addressed by the headteacher and the school secretary, who takes a lead on this in liaising with parents. Attendance is improving. Compared with the same period last year, attendance since September has been better and some pupils from the small group who miss school on a persistent basis are beginning to attend more regularly.

Standards have been well above average over recent years but dropped to average in 2009 because boys did not do well. The boys in this particular year group had weak knowledge and skills when they started Year 1, especially in language and literacy development. However, their achievement was satisfactory. The teachers' assessments predict a rise in standards in 2010 although this cohort was relatively more able on entry to Year 1. These pupils too have made satisfactory progress.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	3
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

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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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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall, but some inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection when the different groups of pupils did not make enough progress in the lesson. Much depends upon the teachers' approach, the quality of planning and the way the lesson is structured and managed. Not all teachers draw routinely upon a wide range of activities and strategies to keep pupils interested and involved. This occasionally leads to some low-level restlessness. Teaching assistants work effectively when they are clear about their role and how they can best support the learning. However, this is not the case in all lessons and some teaching assistants do not feel fully involved. Targets are used well in some cases to help pupils learn. For example, in one class, these are written on laminated cards and kept inside pupils' books as a reminder. Similarly, marking is used well in some cases, particularly when comments, or records of discussions with pupils, are directly related to the main learning point of the lesson. There are some inconsistencies, however, in the use and effectiveness of marking and targets.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been reviewed and adapted since January and these pupils are becoming more included in lessons. Planning is satisfactory for these pupils and other groups but the differences in what each group of pupils is going to learn are not always explicitly defined. The headteacher and staff, including non-teaching staff, place clear emphasis on supporting pupils, especially any who become upset or have difficulties. Good links are in place with other agencies, such as for social care or health, to support individual pupils and families, and there are some clear examples of pupils' attendance and well-being improving as a result.

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?

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

Governors are supportive of the headteacher's vision and the greater focus on pupils' outcomes. They are aware of the main priorities for the school as well as some of the challenges it faces in developing further consistency in provision to help the school move from satisfactory to good. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements, including the out-of-school clubs, and appropriate attention is given to ensuring pupils' health and safety. Analysis of the school's data shows that, while some make better progress than others, no particular group of pupils loses out. Although there is a clear commitment to including pupils, the data and assessments are not yet evaluated effectively enough, by leaders at different levels, to enable equality of opportunity to be better than satisfactory.

The headteacher has taken some appropriate steps to improve provision in her first few weeks. The evaluation of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, started by the previous acting headteacher, is a good example. The support given to the two new teachers in Reception in broadening the range of learning opportunities is another. The changes made are positive ones and there are early signs of impact on pupils' learning and enjoyment. Alongside this, the headteacher has drawn up an improvement plan for the summer term, which includes appropriate priorities. There is a growing awareness among staff that the school's provision must be focused on pupils' learning, enjoyment and achievement. Most of the staff have taken this on board, are behind the changes and keen to play their part in contributing to the school's future improvement. However, there are some pockets of resistance. The quality of self-evaluation is variable and not yet sufficiently focused on the learning and progress of different groups. The school is taking appropriate steps to promote pupils' awareness of cohesion across different groups.

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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age although this does vary and, in some years, aspects of their learning and development are weaker when they start, often in their language and literacy development. Children make satisfactory progress during their first year in school and leave Reception with broadly average attainment. The children are well cared for and there is appropriate attention to ensuring children learn and explore in a safe environment. They enjoy the range of activities that is planned for them. This has improved over recent weeks, as opportunities for promoting children's learning and development both inside and outside have broadened. The outside courtyard area is being used increasingly to support children's learning and development. These improvements have come about as a result of the headteacher's influence and encouragement and both teachers have responded positively to the change in emphasis. Adults are encouraging and sensitive and some effective work was seen during the inspection when they were working with individuals or small groups of children. The children are adjusting well to the changes although some have not yet adapted to the new routines, such as responding when the tidying up music plays and a small group of boys sometimes spend too much time running around in the outside courtyard to no purpose.

Children's learning and development are planned adequately although there has not been time to ensure that the plans reflect the recent developments. The main adult-led activities sometimes lack focus and there are few prompts to guide adults other than teachers who are overseeing child-initiated activities. This means opportunities are sometimes missed by teachers and other adults to interact with children to promote talk, thinking and exploration and take their learning forward, as well as develop children's independence. Adults observe children carefully and make notes on the small steps in their learning and their achievements. These are collated appropriately into learning journals for each child. However, some of these do not provide a full enough record of ongoing learning and progress for all six areas of learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Leadership is satisfactory and is having an impact on improving provision and bringing it more into line with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The headteacher has already had an impact in a short time and additional coordination is being carried out by one of the Reception teachers. However, the leadership roles and responsibilities for the Early Years Foundation Stage are not entirely clear and there is some confusion among staff as to where the responsibilities lie.

□ Children who access the out-of-school child care benefit from a suitable range of opportunities. Adults are caring and promote enjoyment and participation, allowing children to explore, choose and play together. Supervision is appropriate and adults ensure a balance between allowing children to pursue their own interests and interacting with them. Arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements.

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

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires were returned from parents and carers representing just under half of the pupils on the school roll. From these, a very large majority report they are happy with the school's work. Several parents who added comments expressed their support of the new headteacher, based on her first few weeks in post. From the few who expressed concerns, some pointed out that these related to the period prior to the headteacher's appointment and they felt optimistic that their concerns would be listened to and considered. These related mainly to lack of information on pupils' progress, inconsistencies in the quality of provision, including that for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and how inappropriate behaviour is managed. The inspectors agree that there are some inconsistencies in provision, including teaching. The headteacher, and the acting headteacher who led the school in the spring term, have already made a good start in improving provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils do sometimes become over-excited and boisterous. This was handled well during the inspection by staff but it is also affected by the extent to which pupils are given interesting and motivating activities in lessons to channel their energies and inspire them to learn.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 129 pupils registered at the school.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lancastrian Infants' 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	66	15	28	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	29	55	23	43	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	42	28	53	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	42	27	51	3	6	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	23	43	27	51	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	42	27	51	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	36	30	57	2	4	1	2
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)	19	36	28	53	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	40	28	53	3	6	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	19	30	57	6	11	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	23	33	62	5	9	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	16	30	31	58	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	47	23	43	4	8	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 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.



21 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Lancastrian Infants' School, Chichester, PO19 1DG

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited it recently. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you in lessons. Thank you for telling us about some of the things you do in school and a special thank you to the group of pupils who offered to meet one of the inspectors.

We have judged your school to be satisfactory. You are all very friendly and we thought you got on with one another really well. We saw you working well with each other in some of the lessons in pairs or small groups and we noticed many of you trying hard with your work. Your behaviour is good too. The adults in the school look after you well, especially if any of you become a little upset. You learn lots of things in lessons and we know you enjoy many of them. We have asked your teachers to make sure that the things they plan for you in lessons are always interesting to help you to learn really well. We have also asked all the teachers who have a special responsibility for subjects to make sure that they find out how well things are going so that they can sort out anything that needs changing and help you to learn even better. The youngest children, in Reception, have started to use the courtyard area more to help them learn, explore and play. We have asked their teachers to plan these activities very carefully so that they can make the best use of them to help the children learn.

We hope that you will continue to try hard at school, help your teachers and be kind to one another so that everyone enjoys their time at Lancastrian Infants' School.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Dickinson Her Majesty's Inspector

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