

Itchingfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125838
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340849
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Thrussell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Merve Goddard
Headteacher	Mr Simon Simmons
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents including the school improvement plan, policies, monitoring records, governors' minutes, tracking data, local authority reports, and questionnaires completed by 42 parents, 61 pupils and 12 members of staff.

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

- pupils' progress throughout the school and how well teaching contributes to the learning of different groups of pupils, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of assessment to support learning and drive improvements
- the impact of leadership and management at all levels in raising achievement and standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

This is a small primary school based on two sites that are just over a mile apart. The Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 occupy one site and Key Stage 2 the other. Almost all of the pupils are from a White British background. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has gained Activemark, Healthy Schools and Silver-Eco awards.

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

Itchingfield Primary is a satisfactory school. The headteacher has been in post for just over a year and, in that time, he has effectively identified the school's strengths and where improvements are required. He has shared his ambitions for the school and gained the confidence of staff, parents and governors for the actions that are being taken to move the school forward. One parent comments, 'The headteacher is very open and clear about what areas the school needs to develop, and especially how the team can move forward.'

Improvements have been made to the Early Years Foundation Stage which provides a vibrant learning environment and ensures that children get off to a good start in school. The use of 'Discovery Time', where children select their own activities, helps them quickly to become enthusiastic, confident and independent learners. This practice has also been introduced into the Years 1/2 class to provide a continuity of approach to pupils' learning. The school plans to continue this into Key Stage 2, where pupils' learning is more teacher directed, by developing the curriculum to provide opportunities for pupils to take greater initiative for their own learning.

The school has started to track pupils' progress across all stages rather than just separately within each stage. This is providing a clearer picture of pupils' progress from start to finish. It shows that pupils' progress, although satisfactory overall, is inconsistent. At Key Stage 1, more-able pupils particularly do not always make sufficient progress. By the end of Year 5, pupils have considerable catching up to do to reach the challenging targets set for them at the end of Year 6. Particularly strong, well-focused teaching in Year 6 has accelerated pupils' progress so that, by the time they leave the school, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Staff are now more accountable for pupils' progress, with a meeting held each term to discuss this and any signs of underachievement. This is starting to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to identify sooner where pupils need additional support. Nevertheless, a weakness in making accurate assessments remains. The school has relied too heavily on testing rather than the use of ongoing, day-to-day assessments linked to the levels at which pupils are working. As a result, the work planned for pupils is not always matched well enough to their ability and progress sometimes slows as a result.

Many aspects of pupils' personal development are good. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes towards school and learning. They understand the importance of keeping fit and eating sensibly, recognised in national awards. Although pupils take part in different events within the local community, their knowledge and understanding of other communities and cultures beyond their own, especially within the United Kingdom, is limited.

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The school is starting to look at ways to ensure that the leadership, management and provision at both sites provides a stronger continuity of education for pupils. A single system for tracking pupils' progress and the recognition that subject leaders should be accountable for the provision and outcomes at both sites are moves in the right direction. Given the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and its clear recognition of where action is needed to bring about improvements, the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review the structure of leadership and management between the two school sites in order to establish stronger links and ensure a continuity of approach to pupils' learning and progress.
- Improve teachers' skills in assessing pupils' learning and progress in order to:
 - plan appropriate and challenging activities for pupils of all abilities that build on what they have learnt already
 - identify where pupils are not making the progress expected of them and take more immediate action to help them catch up.
 - Develop pupils' greater knowledge and understanding of the diversity of communities and cultures, especially within the United Kingdom.

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

The quality of learning observed in lessons during the inspection, and gleaned from tracking data and pupils' work, was satisfactory overall for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Accelerated progress in Year 6 enables pupils to make up lost ground in their learning and consistently attain above average standards. Nevertheless, given their starting points in Year 3, achievement by Year 6 is variable, with some pupils doing better than expected and others not as well. A weakness in accurately assessing pupils' progress inhibits learning as work is not always matched well enough to their ability.

Pupils say they enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average attendance. They feel safe in school and know who to turn to if they have any concerns. A small minority express concern about others' behaviour and how this is being managed. Inspectors found that behaviour overall is good and generally well managed. The few pupils who display behavioural and social needs are well supported so that disruption to others' learning is avoided. Pupils are proud of the 'ABC gang' who act as playtime buddies and sort out any petty squabbles. Pupils play an active part in the school and local community and recognise the needs of the wider world through fund raising activities and their support of a school in Kenya. Their concern for the environment has been recognised in a national award. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies are fairly routine occasions, often without full staff participation. Displays around the school do not celebrate pupils' learning and achievement to any great extent. Pupils

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themselves say that some displays have been up for a long time.

Given their high level of basic skills and many good aspects of personal development, pupils are well prepared for their future life and learning.

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	2
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
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Information from assessment is not always accurate enough to provide fully secure starting points on which to base pupils' learning. Learning objectives are shared with pupils, although these sometimes relate more to the activities planned for pupils rather than what is to be learnt by completing them. In better lessons, pupils are more fully involved in their learning and have good opportunities to discuss and evaluate their work. In some lessons, teachers' introductions, although quite thorough, are overlong and lessen the time for pupils to work independently. Adult support is not used fully enough throughout lessons, or always sufficiently focused on the learning of any particular group, including the more-able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning. Introductions are enlivened using interactive

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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whiteboards, and computers provide a tool for pupils to use in lessons. In one lesson seen in Year 6, pupils were adept at setting out time lines of important historical figures as part of their work on biographies. Pupils are given targets to help them improve their work. Older pupils especially recall them and understand their purpose, recording when they have been met.

The curriculum adequately meets the learning needs of pupils. There has been a move towards a more creative, topic-based curriculum. More work is planned on this to ensure that the opportunities for pupils to use and develop their different subject skills are fully and appropriately challenging, and provide opportunities for independent work. Within literacy, basic skills are consistently taught, but limited opportunities for pupils to use and apply them within longer planned units of study reduce the impact. Overall, the curriculum makes good provision for pupils' personal development, although it does not sufficiently reflect different cultures and communities in the world today. A range of enrichment opportunities, including after school clubs and educational visits, contributes well to pupils' social development.

Recent improvements to safeguarding procedures have improved the quality of care provided for pupils. Pupils who are vulnerable, and their families, are well supported. This draws effectively on the support of outside specialists, such as for speech, language and communication, and social and behavioural needs. Positive relationships and clear guidelines ensure that pupils behave well. Outside areas are generally well supervised although midday supervision, especially at the Key Stage 2 site, tends to be from the sidelines rather than actively involved in what pupils are doing.

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?

Careful self-evaluation means that the school has identified key areas for improvement and been able to plan appropriate actions, which have met with some success, particularly with regard to safeguarding, the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage and procedures for tracking pupils' progress. Generally, the school ensures satisfactorily that pupils are free from discrimination and have equal opportunities. However, subject leaders, especially in English, have not always quickly identified underachievement when it has occurred, in order to take more immediate action to remedy this and ensure full equality of opportunity for all pupils. The monitoring of teaching has accurately identified how it could be improved and appropriate action is

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starting to be taken to secure this. Governors are supportive of the work of the school. They are involved in the school's self-evaluation and are developing their monitoring role in relation to actions for school improvement. They have worked closely with the school to improve safeguarding arrangements, which are now satisfactory. Enhancements to the security and access arrangements at both sites have done much to ensure pupils' greater safety. The school works closely with parents and carers who are encouraged to play their part in their children's education and the life of the school. Good links with other local schools enable joint projects to be undertaken, such as courses for parenting. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school has rightly identified that action especially needs to be taken to develop further pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom.

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 enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a level of skills that is broadly in line with that expected at this age. Although children generally make satisfactory progress, recently extended and refurbished accommodation has considerably improved the provision so that children are starting to make better progress in the different areas of learning, for example in personal and social development and communication skills. Good links with parents, carers and pre-school providers ensure that children quickly settle into school. Their behaviour is very good and they rapidly learn social skills, such as taking turns and sharing with others. The setting provides a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. Staff make learning fun, for example by

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providing exciting role-play areas such as the castle where children 'charge for admission' and take pretend photographs of visitors. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor areas in providing varied opportunities for children to practise a range of skills. Staff observe children well and make full use of assessments to adapt future learning to their individual needs, recording progress carefully in a 'My Learning Journey' for each child.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost a half of parents and carers returned questionnaires. A very large majority are happy with their children's experiences of school. Inspectors agree with them that the school listens to their concerns, keeps their children safe, and ensures that they are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. A few are nevertheless concerned about the progress their children make in their learning, and that behaviour is not managed effectively. Although satisfactory overall, the inspection finds that the school has work to do to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress, and that behaviour is good and well managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Itchingfield 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 110 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	61	15	37	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	61	16	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	46	18	44	3	7	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	37	20	49	5	12	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	20	50	18	45	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	24	26	63	5	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	39	25	61	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	30	18	45	4	10	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	34	22	54	5	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	32	19	46	4	10	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	29	23	56	3	7	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	19	46	18	44	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	49	17	42	2	5	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 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.



6 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Itchingfield Primary School, Horsham, RH13 0NT

Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke with some of you during our visit and you were interesting to talk to, polite and helpful. You spoke quite enthusiastically about enjoying school and all the things you take part in. Itchingfield Primary is a satisfactory school, which means that some things are good but some things need to be improved.

These are the things that the school does well.

- Children get off to a good start in Reception.
- When you leave the school in Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average.
- You all know how to keep fit and eat the right things.
- You are encouraged to play your part in the life of the school and local community.
- Your parents and carers are encouraged to play their part in the life of the school and to support you in your learning.
- Your headteacher is doing a good job.

We have asked the school to work on the following things.

- The school must ensure that its two sites work more closely together so that you all make the very best of your time in school.
- Teachers must carefully check how well you are doing so that they can plan work that is just right for each one of you, not too easy and not too difficult. This would also help them to quickly find those of you who need extra help with your work.
- There are many different cultures and communities in our country and the school must help you learn more about them.

Thank you again for your help. You can do your bit to help by working hard in lessons and enjoying all that you do in school.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead inspector

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