

Medmerry Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125926
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340869
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Greenwood
Headteacher	George Bell
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed 10 teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher and members of the school's senior leadership team, members of the governing body, school staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, minutes of governors' meetings, school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupil records and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed the views of parents and carers in the 72 Ofsted questionnaires returned.

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

- how pupils make progress in Years 3 to 6 compared to Years 1 and 2
- the effect on learning of the high number of pupils found in some classes
- the effect of possible inconsistencies in attendance rates on pupils' attainment and achievement and the impact of initiatives to improve attendance.

Information about the school

The school is situated in an isolated community at the end of the Manhood Peninsula. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and few come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Some class sizes are above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average, although the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the school's Reception class.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Parents and carers are positive in their views of the school. One said that she was 'delighted with the school' while others commented that they felt the school provided a good education for their children. Inspectors agree with these views. The headteacher and his dedicated staff have created a caring environment where pupils feel extremely safe and enjoy learning. Pupils' attitudes to school are good and this is reflected in their good behaviour and in their good attendance rates, which have risen recently because of the success of the school's initiatives to improve pupils' attendance.

Pupils' progress and achievement are good overall, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, pupils' rates of progress vary in different year groups because of differences in the quality of teaching. Excellent teaching enables children to make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This excellent start is not built on to best effect in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is satisfactory and pupils only make satisfactory progress. However, the quality of teaching throughout the rest of the school is consistently good or better. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 display good subject knowledge and very effective class management skills. Pupils in these year groups work hard because teachers make lessons interesting and this adds to their enjoyment of learning. As a result, pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well, even though class sizes are above those normally seen in primary schools. Attainment is above average in Year 6 and inspection evidence, supported by school data, confirms that pupils are on target to attain above-average standards in the forthcoming national tests.

Pupils are keen to talk about the good range of popular extra-curricular activities provided by the school and about school trips to places of interest, such as Bristol and the transport museum at Beaulieu. However, even the oldest pupils have little understanding of the multicultural nature of society in the United Kingdom or of other cultures in the wider world. They find joining in conversations about these difficult through lack of experience, and this remains a gap in their learning.

The school is committed to taking a leading role working in effective partnerships with several outside organisations, including the Manhood community and other local schools. It uses these partnerships excellently to increase the range of opportunities for pupils to develop both socially and academically. For example, the school has been a driving force working with local schools on a successful project to ensure improved inclusion opportunities for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is presently working closely with a number of outside organisations on a project to provide pupils with better sporting opportunities. Systems for monitoring and

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evaluating the school's work are good and are used effectively to enable the headteacher and governors to have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set clear priorities for improvement. Staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team to ensure the school reaches the challenging targets it sets itself. This has been a key factor in the improvement of the overall effectiveness of the school since the last inspection and further indicates that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2 by raising the standard of teaching in these year groups. (Timescale: end of autumn term 2010)
- Improve the quality of community cohesion and increase pupils' cultural awareness and understanding, especially that of the multicultural nature of modern society in the United Kingdom, by providing pupils with regular opportunities to increase their knowledge and experience of the wider world in which they live. (Timescale: end of autumn term 2010)

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils are very positive about school. The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. However, while aspects of their cultural development are in need of improvement, their spiritual, moral and social development is strong, and this is reflected in the respect and care pupils display for others. They are also aware that a very small and diminishing number of pupils find behaving acceptably difficult. However, pupils are confident that adults will always deal with any rare instances of unkind behaviour quickly and fairly.

Pupils comment that they like using information and communication technology, while others say they enjoy sporting activities and looking after the school's animal enclosure. Pupils enjoy lessons, especially when teachers use interactive audiovisual whiteboards to make learning interesting. Pupils work well, both independently and in small groups, and have developed good attitudes to learning. These good attitudes to work enable teachers to concentrate on helping pupils who are experiencing difficulties in learning. This was the case in a lesson to Year 3 pupils when the class teacher and her assistants had the time to help individual pupils complete their tasks because all the others were able to work well independently.

Pupils say that they like their teachers because they are 'helpful' and 'kind'. They respond well to the caring approach taken by the school, and this adds to their enjoyment of learning and to their progress. Teachers in Year 3 to Year 6 try to make sure that the work pupils are asked to complete in lessons is matched to their different abilities, and this is a key factor in ensuring that all pupils in these year groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Pupils are very aware of the importance of exercising regularly and eating healthy foods. They are very proud of the role of the school council in ensuring the school listens to

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their views, and older pupils believe they make a good contribution to the school and the wider community by, for example, organising cake sales to raise money for local causes. Pupils' good skills in literacy and numeracy, their good attitudes to learning and their good collaborative and independent skills are preparing them well for their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum links different subjects together well in order to ensure learning is relevant, purposeful and enjoyable for pupils. The quality of pupils' work on display is of a good standard and provides clear evidence that the improvement in the school's effectiveness since the last inspection is not just restricted to test results. The school has developed very comprehensive assessment systems to track how well individual pupils are progressing and uses these well to monitor the progress of individual pupils. Pupils say they look forward to lessons, especially when the work they are asked to complete offers them just the right level of challenge. However, in the small number of observed lessons where teaching was satisfactory, introductions were sometimes quite long and

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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opportunities were missed to set appropriate work for pupils of differing abilities.

The school promotes an outstanding level of care, guidance and support for pupils. Parents and carers comment enthusiastically on the excellent quality of the 'close, caring relationships' the school provides for their children. Pupils say they always feel very welcome at school and are confident they will always be well looked after. Very effective induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines and all pupils receive very good levels of targeted care and support in order to help them make the best use of the opportunities provided for them by the school. Pupils are treated as individuals and the school works very closely with several outside agencies in order to offer a very high level of care and support to families and pupils who are hard to reach or who are facing challenging circumstances.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The good quality of leadership and management is reflected in the thoroughness of the school's self-evaluation and the quality of its development planning. The headteacher has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Parents and carers and all members of staff agree that the headteacher has worked hard to improve the effectiveness of the school since the previous inspection and to ensure that any discrimination is not tolerated and all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. He has been well supported by the senior leadership team and by the governing body, which takes its duties seriously and offers the school a good level of support and challenge.

The school has worked hard to forge good links with parents and carers, who are unanimous in agreeing that the school always keeps them informed about their children's progress. The headteacher and staff are always on hand to meet parents and carers both before and after school each day. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet all requirements. This is reflected in the precision of the staff recruitment and vetting checks and the way in which the school regularly monitors and evaluates its policies and practices. Staff and governors frequently receive training about safeguarding issues and are well aware of the importance of their role in protecting pupils.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. It has built up very effective links with the local community, which it uses well to develop pupils' understanding of the immediate world around them. However, pupils have only a limited

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appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community. The school has developed excellent links with a number of outside agencies, including the social services, which it uses very effectively when required to do so, especially when supporting pupils who may be experiencing emotional, social or learning difficulties. Resources are good and used effectively to enhance learning for pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The words of one parent aptly summed up the outstanding quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage: 'My child is doing really well in the Reception class. She loves school and can't wait to get there in the morning.'

Children's skill levels when they join the Reception class are below those expected for their age, and often well below in social and language development. Children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning because the Early Years Foundation Stage leader works very hard to ensure teaching caters extremely well for the needs of all children, regardless of their abilities or previous experiences.

The Reception classroom provides children with a bright and colourful learning environment while the outdoor area is stimulating and exciting. From the moment children enter the Reception class, excellent leadership ensures a high priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development. Their welfare is also given a high priority and children are happy, feel very safe and quickly develop the skills needed to interact well with classmates and adults. The teacher works extremely well with her very able learning support assistants to ensure that learning is interesting and exciting

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for children. As a result, behaviour is excellent and children's attitudes to learning outstanding. Lessons provide very well-structured opportunities for children to build up their understanding of the world in which they live while at the same time prioritising improving skills in all areas of learning, especially language development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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 large majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaires or who were spoken to by inspectors held positive views about the school. Several who responded agreed with all the statements on the questionnaire. Nearly all were happy with their children's experiences at the school. The overwhelming majority believed their children enjoyed school and several commented favourably about how safe they felt their children were. However, a very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about the school. Some felt the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour or take their views into account, while others expressed some concerns about the leadership and management of the school. A small minority felt their children did not make sufficient progress and that the school did not meet their children's particular needs

Inspectors considered these comments and judged that the leadership and management of the school were good and that the school takes parents' and carers' views into account and deals with unacceptable behaviour effectively. Inspectors also judged that pupils made good progress, although this varied in different year groups, and that the school met the needs of pupils well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Medmerry 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	71	19	26	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	52	72	19	26	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	51	71	20	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	57	24	33	5	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	47	65	21	29	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	61	22	31	7	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	54	28	39	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	41	57	23	32	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	53	21	29	6	8	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	54	21	29	6	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	57	18	25	9	13	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	41	57	22	31	5	8	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	69	16	22	5	8	1	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.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Medmerry Primary School, Selsey PO20 0QJ

Thank you for welcoming myself and the other two inspectors to your school. Everyone was very friendly, and we enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you working hard in lessons.

We believe your school is a good school.

Here are some of the highlights of your school.

- The school has improved since the last time it was inspected.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the Reception class.
- The quality of care, guidance and support you receive from your school is outstanding and you all feel very safe.
- You behave well, especially in class, and you enjoy learning.
- The governors, together with the headteacher and his staff, have worked hard to improve the school and want to make the school even better.

Here are some of the things we have asked your school to do to help it to improve.

- We have asked the school to improve the quality of teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 so that it is as good as in the rest of the school. This will help you to make even better progress.
- We have also asked the school to help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds than yourselves.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and remember, you can help your school to get even better by attending school regularly and continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Barron

Lead inspector

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