

The Windmills Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125939
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340875
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter McGregor

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Smith
Headteacher	Eileen Sharpe
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2009
School address	Dale Avenue Hassocks West Sussex BN6 8LS
Telephone number	01273 842421
Fax number	01273 844675
Email address	office@windmills.w-sussex.sch.uk

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2009
Inspection number	340875

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and met with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at the self-evaluation form, school improvement plan, a sample of pupils' books, curriculum planning and a wide range of policies, including safeguarding information. They also took into account the views of parents, pupils and staff stated in questionnaire responses.

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

- how well teaching contributes to pupils' progress and high standards
- how effectively the curriculum promotes high standards
- how well pupils' progress data are used
- how thoroughly the school has responded to the recommendations of the last report
- the effectiveness of the leadership team in raising pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

The school is of average size. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Almost all pupils are fluent English speakers. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The needs of these pupils are mainly moderate learning difficulties and dyslexia. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is low.

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

The school provides an education of a similar quality to that at the time of the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress and attain above average standards, building upon their above average standards on entry to Year 3. Their knowledge and understanding of science is better than of mathematics. Standards are lowest in English, particularly writing, although reading is good. Girls are more successful than boys. Pupils' achievements are dependent to a great extent upon the quality of teaching, which is inconsistent. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to others.

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Most pupils are polite and considerate to their peers and teachers, and respond quickly to instructions. They enjoy coming to school and adopt healthy lifestyles; they feel, and are, safe in the school. The house system, sports teams and tasks carried out around the school provide good opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities. Appropriate literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, and a confident, secure outlook, prepare the pupils well for the next stage in their education. Attendance is good, as is pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teaching is satisfactory, with strengths in some areas, but expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Work is not matched carefully enough to pupils' prior knowledge and capabilities. Pupils' progress is evaluated but best use is not made of assessment data to bring about improvements. Extra-curricular clubs and activities, particularly in sports, are appreciated and well attended by the pupils. Educational visits are popular and add to pupils' enjoyment as well as their learning. New curriculum schemes are being written to provide better guidance for teachers and better continuity in learning as pupils move through the school, particularly in writing. Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Pupils value the work of support staff whose main task is 'to remove barriers to pupils' learning'.

The headteacher has a clear vision for an academically successful school where a high quality of care is provided. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of education available. Support from her senior leadership team is patchy, which is restricting progress towards the vision. Monitoring of teaching and learning has been a little generous. Governance is satisfactory. Safeguarding policies and procedures are good and systematically monitored by governors who carry out all their statutory duties effectively. Parents are supportive of the school in nearly all areas.

Satisfactory progress has been made in tackling the issues identified in the last inspection, with some improvement in the subject leader role, the preparation of pupil

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

progress data, and the usefulness of marking. The headteacher's drive for improvement is not consistently implemented by all staff. Self-evaluation, although generous in places, is generally sound. The school's capacity to make further progress is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the academic standards pupils achieve, particularly boys in writing, through more effective teaching and better curriculum planning for pupils of all abilities, aiming to reach the school's challenging targets set for 11-year-olds in 2010.
- Increase the overall quality of teaching from satisfactory to good through rigorous monitoring and effective support and guidance for individual staff, focusing on raising expectations.
- Ensure that leadership and management across the senior team support the headteacher consistently and well, providing a role model for the improvement of middle leadership and the quality of teaching.

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

The quality of pupils' writing is starting to improve as a result of the introduction of a new scheme. Pupils and staff find the extended time given to this initiative an important aspect of its success. Promotion of good writing across subjects is less effective, with too little emphasis on expecting pupils to write accurately and at length. Boys are less inclined to become involved in their writing tasks than the girls. This has an impact on their success when teaching is insufficiently demanding. Pupils' speaking, listening and reading develop well through the good range of opportunities available to enhance these skills. Pupils' knowledge of mathematics across the expected range of areas is satisfactory. They do not progress as rapidly as they could when the pace of a lesson is unchallenging. Pupils' lively activity during breaks and the lunch period is managed well. They play well together making good use of the playground facilities. Pupils as well as staff consider safety a high priority. Healthy lifestyles are apparent in their interest in sport, including competitive inter-school fixtures and the whole-school run each Friday afternoon, as well as the sensible food that a majority eat at lunchtime. Although attendance is good, a number of parents still take their children out of school for family holidays, which detracts from their learning. Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is better than their understanding and valuing of different cultures. Pupils have opportunities for sensitive reflection, for example in some history and English lessons. During a Year 6 lesson, talk partners discussed perceptively 'How did the victims feel?' when preparing a news report about an avalanche. Pupils raise money for charities of their choosing, provide support one for the other if anyone is feeling upset, and have a good understanding of right and wrong. They have a sound knowledge of various cultural traditions, although they are stronger on local knowledge than more distant communities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers generally have good knowledge of appropriate subject vocabularies and make effective use of new technology in their teaching. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is managed very well. Occasionally, a slow pace and low expectations of what should be achieved restrict the progress pupils can make in a lesson. Tracking of individual pupils' progress is well documented, with termly reviews of targets. Staff are aware of whether expectations are met or not. Assessment is less effective in providing clear 'next steps' for pupils so that they know what must be done to improve the standard of their work. Transition between activities can be slow so that learning time is lost. Pupils benefit from good curriculum links with the infant school, from which most pupils come, and the local secondary school, to which most transfer ' particularly in physical education and science. Helpful additional support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as they join the school. The school's new curriculum planning is establishing strong progression in pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills as they move through the school. The residential activity centre visit for Year 6 makes a successful contribution to pupils' personal development ' they feel that they get to know themselves and each other very well. Staff timetables indicate that best use is not always made of the available time with some uncertainty over timings and the juxtaposition of similar subjects and activities. Staff know pupils well and relationships are good. Good policies support the quality of care provided. The school council wrote

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

the anti-bullying policy, which was then formally signed by the headteacher in front of the whole school.

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?

Governors are very supportive of the school and are now developing their role, evaluating the progress being made in the areas identified in the school development plan. They are starting to hold staff to account for the pupils' achievements, aware that some improvements are needed. Senior staff are well intentioned but not all are effective as role models in the classroom or as leaders and managers. Although monitoring of the quality of educational provision is taking place, the process is not resulting in the needed improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. Understanding of the principles of community cohesion is sound and governors have made a start on monitoring the quality of provision. The school has good links with the local community through the active involvement of the pupils. For example, the school choir sings in the local garden centre and food is collected at Harvest Festival and delivered by the children to the local branch of a charity for the elderly. Stronger associations with more distant groups are being developed. The school promotes equality of opportunity as it works to close gaps in achievement between boys and girls and to ensure that pupils of different prior knowledge are all successful. Discrimination is challenged and the school values and respects the differing backgrounds of its pupils. Parents receive regular newsletters, which include useful curriculum information. Each year, they have opportunities for consultation with teachers on three occasions and their views are surveyed.

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

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

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents' responses in questionnaires were positive about The Windmills Junior School. They are particularly pleased that their children are kept safe, enjoy attending school, and are well prepared for transfer to their secondary schools, all points with which inspectors agree. A few parents are dissatisfied with the information they receive on their children's progress, with the progress their children are making and the extent to which parents are helped to support their own children's learning. Evidence indicates progress is not as great as it could be but no compelling evidence was found to support the other negative views expressed by this small minority. Individual positive and negative comments were also made but no common threads were apparent in these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Windmills Junior 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 231 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	53	33	41	4	5	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	49	60	31	38	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	25	51	63	9	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	35	39	48	12	15	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	25	31	48	59	5	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	33	41	51	11	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	43	41	51	5	6	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)	40	49	32	40	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	33	43	53	6	7	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	25	53	65	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	25	47	58	3	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	33	41	35	43	7	9	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	42	39	48	6	7	0	0

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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



4 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Windmills Junior School, Hassocks, BN6 8LS

Thank you for your welcome and for looking after us when we visited your school. We greatly enjoyed talking with you and hearing what you had to say.

The Windmills Junior School is providing you with a satisfactory education. You behave well both in and outside the classroom and you get on well together. You told us that you enjoy school and how good the clubs are after school, and we know that your attendance is good. We are impressed with how much you know about keeping healthy, and what is the right thing to do when you have choices. We agree with you and your parents that the staff take good care of you. A few of you said that the school does not take sufficient notice of what you say and you do not really know how well you are doing. Teaching is satisfactory, which helps you to make satisfactory progress. The headteacher knows what needs to be done to help the school improve.

Here are some of the things we have asked the headteacher to do, with the support of her senior leaders:

- Help you make better progress, particularly boys, by making sure that work in lessons is not too easy and that you do enough writing.
- Keep developing the curriculum so that the work you do is just right for you and helps you to do well.

We know that you will want to continue to enjoy learning and to work even harder and do well.

Yours sincerely

Peter McGregor

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.