

# Maidenbower Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131603
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	341176
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Thrussell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	580
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Bailey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Murphy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	0 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Harvest Road Maidenbower Crawley RH10 7RA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Approximately 65% of the inspection time involved looking at pupils' learning, including through the observation of 21 lessons. Eighteen of the twenty classes and 19 teachers were observed. Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, governors, other senior staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at documents including the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, documents relating to safeguarding, and the results of questionnaires returned by 282 parents and carers.

An Ofsted administrative error resulted in the omission of one question in the parental questionnaire. Whilst this has not affected the overall outcome of the inspection it does mean that the parental response on the question '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)' is not recorded in the report.

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

- pupils' progress and how well teaching contributes to their learning, looking especially at lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and more able pupils
- the effectiveness and use of assessment and the support systems to drive improvement
- the role of leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, in securing and sustaining improvements
- the particular strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being.

## Information about the school

Maidenbower is a large, five-form entry junior school. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small but growing proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, a few of whom are at an early stage of learning English. A very small proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average overall, but above average for those with a statement of special educational needs. The main needs are specific and moderate learning difficulties, and speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has a special support centre that caters for up to 12 pupils with statements of special educational needs related to specific learning difficulties. The school has gained a number of awards including the Green Flag environmental, Activemark and Healthy School Status.

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

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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Maidenbower Junior is a satisfactory school. The headteacher, assistant headteachers and other senior staff work closely together to ensure that the school runs smoothly. The four assistant headteachers each have oversight of the five classes in a year group. Despite this, the school has no clear overall view of how well pupils are progressing in their learning. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is tracked through testing, but there is no breakdown of the results to show how well different year groups, classes and groups of pupils are performing. Consequently, actions to raise the progress and attainment of more able pupils, particularly in writing, have been too slow. The school has started to implement more effective methods of assessment. Nevertheless, based on annual test results and observations of teaching and learning during the inspection, pupils overall are making satisfactory progress given their above average starting points in Year 3. National tests at the end of Year 6 show attainment to be above average in English, mathematics and science. Joint planning ensures that teachers work closely together, sharing expertise and experience and supporting new colleagues. They make further ongoing assessments to group pupils by ability and to identify where further support is needed, although the use and quality of these are inconsistent and records do not always identify the precise levels at which pupils should be working.

In some good lessons seen, the work set for different ability groups was appropriate and challenging, so that all pupils made good progress. This was clear in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, where the teacher knew the precise stages that pupils were at in their grasp of division, and had planned the work and support accordingly. However, in too many lessons seen work was not as well structured. This meant that at times less able pupils, including those with learning difficulties, found the work too hard and more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged. In discussion, some pupils from higher ability groups said that their work was not always hard enough. Pupils set themselves learning targets. Often these are too general and not related closely enough to their levels of attainment to provide guidance on how to improve. Almost 20% of the pupils who returned the inspection questionnaire indicated that they did not know how well they were doing in school. The school has rightly recognised this.

Pupils enjoy school, as shown in their high attendance. They particularly enjoy topic work, especially the lively introductions and the many visits that support their learning. Year 5 pupils were 'wowed' by their visit to the British Museum when learning about Ancient Greece. Pupils are keen to eat healthily and to take exercise, recognised in national awards. All take part in the different sporting opportunities on offer and the school is proud of its successes in local tournaments. Pupils are passionate about caring for the environment, also recognised by an award.

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Without a full analysis of progress data and the limited monitoring of the quality of teaching, the school's self-evaluation is inaccurate. The targets that it sets out in its school improvement plan, although appropriate, are not sufficiently focused on raising the level and consistency of progress throughout the school. Despite the high standards maintained in recent years, this shows that the school's capacity for further improvement is only satisfactory.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the procedures for, and regularity of, the assessment and tracking pupils' progress so that:
  - the school has a clear overall view of the progress being made by individual pupils, each class and year group, and different groups of pupils
  - teachers have information from which to plan more precisely the next steps in pupils' learning so that all, especially the more able, are fully challenged in their learning so that they progress more quickly
  - the school can more readily identify and support underachievement
  - pupils can be better informed of how well they are doing.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and sharing good practice
  - monitoring the provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially in the classroom setting.

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy lessons, want to do their best and make satisfactory progress. Pupils' behaviour overall is good and they have positive attitudes to learning. A positive feature of lessons is the use of learning partners, which encourages pupils to cooperate and work independently. Pupils change these partners fortnightly and benefit from the opportunity to learn alongside a range of others. The system works well and encourages pupils to talk about their learning and to share ideas and understanding. Learning in the special support centre is well planned, enabling pupils to make good progress. Observations during the inspection showed that where lower attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties, are withdrawn for focused support, this helps to accelerate their progress. However, the support for these pupils in lessons is not as well organised. The style and level of work planned is not sufficiently matched to their needs, so that their progress slows.

Pupils feel safe in school and say that there is no bullying. They trust adults in school and say that 'they are easy to talk to'. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, whether as a member of the school council, as a peer mediator or monitoring the amount of electricity supplied from the school's wind turbine. A very strong emphasis on global citizenship within the curriculum is helping pupils to gain an insight into different

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world communities, the inequalities that exist in the world, and the importance of 'Fairtrade'. Opportunities to plan and carry out fundraising activities develop pupils' good enterprise skills. Given a good level of personal and social development, above average academic standards and good skills in information and communication technology (ICT), pupils are well prepared for their future learning.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well prepared. Good use is made of resources to support and enliven pupils' learning. Interactive whiteboards are used well to introduce lessons, model work, and share with pupils what they are expected to achieve in the lesson. In a few lessons, introductions are too long so that insufficient time is left for independent activities and for teaching assistants to fully support the pupils and groups they are assigned to. Further, pupils do not have sufficient time to discuss and evaluate their learning. When the level of questioning does not recognise the full range of ability pupils are not all involved and a few start to lose concentration and become restless. A few pupils expressed concern about behaviour, but the inspection found this to be well managed

<sup>1</sup> 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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Planned activities take account of the range of ability within classes, but this relies too much on the additional support pupils are given to complete a common activity rather than adapting it more fully to pupils' different levels of ability and aptitude.

The school has started to introduce a more creative curriculum that makes links between different subjects and encourages pupils to use and develop their key skills. This approach engages pupils in interesting and purposeful topic work, and is starting to provide them with further opportunities for writing and research, using their ICT skills. It has yet to be adequately monitored and evaluated for its impact on attainment, and to ensure that skills are being developed progressively from year to year in line with pupils' abilities. There is very good provision for pupils' personal and social development. A wide range of well-attended clubs, many educational visits, including residential visits for each year group, effectively contribute to this. Just over a quarter of pupils benefit from musical tuition, and the teaching of modern foreign languages is well established. Sufficient additional provision is provided for gifted and talented pupils through local authority extension and enrichment courses.

Effective safeguarding procedures help to provide a safe and secure learning environment for pupils and ensure a very high level of pastoral care. Transition arrangements for pupils starting at the school and when transferring to Key Stage 3 are very well developed and help pupils to settle quickly. Pupils with particular learning difficulties, such as in speech, language and communication, are well supported by trained assistants, drawing on strong links with outside specialists. Support for pupils at an early stage of learning English is in place but this provision lacks a policy and guidelines.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders are keen to bring about school improvements, but are restricted in the focus of their actions through weaknesses in monitoring, both of the progress pupils are making in their learning and the quality of teaching to bring this about. The school improvement plan does not sufficiently show how actions are to be monitored and evaluated in relation to raising attainment and progress across the school, or how improvements in teaching will contribute to these. This restricts the monitoring role, of the governing body and the challenge it can offer. Governors, nevertheless, are supportive of the work of the school and ensure that satisfactory safeguarding

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arrangements are in place. There is some recorded evidence to show that lessons are being observed to establish where improvements need to be made and support given, but many observations are informal and unrecorded. There has been no scrutiny of planning or direct observation of in-class and withdrawal support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to check on the quality of this provision for this group. The resulting inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, also observed during the inspection, mean that the school's promotion of equal opportunity is satisfactory rather than good. The school works well in partnership with a local group of schools, sharing and leading on curriculum developments. The school has evaluated pupils' understanding of different communities and their attitudes towards them. The promotion of community cohesion, now an integral part of the curriculum, has effectively raised pupils' understanding of different communities.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Views of parents and carers**

A very large majority of parents and carers is fully supportive of the school and its work. A few do not feel that the school takes enough account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection finds that the school works hard to involve parents and carers in their children's education, for example, through regular planned consultation, workshops and the daily opportunities for informal conversations with staff. The inspectors found no evidence to substantiate any individual concerns.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Maidenbower 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 282 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 580 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	152	54	110	39	9	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	162	57	99	35	10	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	93	33	158	56	18	6	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	110	39	145	51	15	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	138	49	130	46	1	0	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	106	38	53	54	9	3	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	132	47	129	46	11	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)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	118	42	136	48	11	4	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	96	34	146	52	16	6	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	24	161	57	21	7	4	1
The school is led and managed effectively	129	46	126	45	10	4	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	152	54	109	39	6	2	1	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



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21 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maidenbower Junior School, Crawley, RH10 7RA

Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke with some of you during our visit and found you interesting to talk to, very polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all the things you take part in. Maidenbower Junior 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.

- Your attendance is excellent.
- The school looks after you well.
- You behave very well and are keen to take on responsibilities and to do jobs around school.
- The school encourages you to eat healthily and keep fit.
- You are extremely aware of the importance of looking after the environment and caring for the world.
- The school provides many additional activities for you. You benefit from many clubs and educational visits, learn a number of foreign languages and to play musical instruments.

We have asked the school to work on the following things. Leaders know that they need to improve the way they check and record how well you are all doing in school. They need to use this information to plan work that is just right for each one of you, neither too easy nor too hard, so that you all make the best progress possible, especially those of you that are more able. They must also use it to tell you how well you are doing and how you could do even better, and to quickly identify those of you who need extra help with your work. Leaders must ensure that all lessons are of a high quality and that those of you who find learning difficult get good support in classroom lessons. This will help you all to make the best progress possible.

Thank you again for your help. You can do your bit to help by working hard in lessons

and continuing to enjoy all that you do in school.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead inspector

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