

# Moulsecoomb Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132028
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brighton and Hove
<b>Inspection number</b>	341275
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Long

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	396
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anne Meadows
<b>Headteacher</b>	Charles Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	The Highway Brighton BN2 4PA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 605700
<b>Fax number</b>	01273 690595
<b>Email address</b>	office@moulsecoomb.brighton-hove.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors spent about half the time available in observing learning, seeing 15 lessons taught by 15 different teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at samples of pupils' work and assessment records, a range of documents including the school's strategic plans and evaluations, assessment information and school policies. The team analysed 45 questionnaires from parents and carers, 98 from pupils and 27 from staff.

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

- the effectiveness of work to build on strengths in care, guidance and support, including through partnership work with parents and carers
- whether the quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 has improved since the last inspection
- the impact of work to support the very high proportion of pupils who now have special educational needs and/or disabilities the contribution made to the quality of provision by those in middle leadership positions and by the governors.

## Information about the school

Moulsecoomb Primary School is above average in size, and an above average proportion of its pupils are eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exceptionally high, at around eight in ten pupils. It has risen sharply in recent years, partly because of transfers in from other local schools. The range of needs has become increasingly complex, and many pupils now have significant speech, language and emotional or behavioural problems. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average. The school gained Healthy School status and a Learning Outside the Classroom award in 2008 and an International School award in 2009. It offers extended services including breakfast and after-school clubs. The Nursery area was substantially extended in 2008.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

Moulsecoomb Primary School is a satisfactory and improving school. It offers outstanding care and a nurturing environment in which pupils' achievement is growing. The staff are passionately committed to their school and their morale is high. Led well by the headteacher, they are rising to the challenge of catering for a very large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Staff have worked hard to adapt teaching so it better meets pupils' changing needs. Lessons are lively and purposeful, small-group work is well targeted and progress is good and gaining ground. Pupils' low attainment on entry, coupled with the extent of the additional learning needs of many pupils, mean that attainment remains below the national average when they leave, especially in literacy. While teaching is effective, some whole-class phases of lessons are not planned carefully enough to meet all pupils' needs, and opportunities are occasionally missed to encourage pupils to think independently about their work. The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved, including through better use of the outdoor area. Children now make good progress. They settle in well and begin to establish better foundations for learning. However, there are times when teachers give too little consideration to how children can be guided in choosing activities so as to maximise their learning.

The majority of pupils enjoy school and behave well because of the care provided. They are proud of their school and very keen to take on responsibilities. They make an outstanding contribution to the school community, as typified by the very many who were keen to show the inspection team around. Pupils' enjoyment is rooted in a good curriculum which ensures they are given interesting things to do. These include opportunities for learning outside the classroom, for example using the Iron Age huts in the grounds, and making off-site visits. The school is focusing closely on building pupils' literacy skills through 'letters and sounds' programmes which are making a positive impact. Pupils enjoy projects linking different curriculum areas, although such activities are not always exploited fully to reinforce their literacy targets.

The school works very hard to build links with parents, who feel staff do a good job in getting them involved in their children's education. The school works equally hard to make connections with the wider community and external partners so as to broaden pupils' learning experiences and enhance the care offered to them. These initiatives, together with the improvements made to teaching and the curriculum, demonstrate that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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

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- Improve attainment by ensuring that teaching consistently:
  - builds pupils' confidence to take the next steps in learning more independently.
  - challenges all pupils during whole-class phases of lessons, but especially pupils with significant levels of special educational need and the most able builds pupils' confidence to take the next steps in learning more independently.
- Enhance the contribution made by the curriculum to pupils' literacy skills by ensuring that cross-curricular projects are systematically linked to pupils' literacy targets. Boost children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by guiding them to activities which build their learning when they are selecting what to do for themselves.
- Boost children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by guiding them to activities which build their learning when they are selecting what to do for themselves.

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

Pupils were typically seen to be making good progress in lessons during the inspection, although their attainment is held back throughout the school by their limited basic skills and remains below average even for the oldest year groups. Most lessons are characterised by an enjoyment of learning, notably of practical or discussion-based tasks. Low attainment in basic literacy impedes pupils' learning and some lack confidence in making decisions about their work for themselves. The very many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support provided for them. Pupils' social and moral development is good. They develop strong team-working skills when sharing resources and are enthusiastic in celebrating each other's achievements. Different groups mix well together and are tolerant, for example of each other's ethnic heritage. Pupils are very keen to take on roles and responsibilities so there are few aspects of school life where they do not play an active part. For example, they help in the school garden, lead play at break time and serve on the school council. The pupils feel safe and very well cared for at school. They have great confidence that the staff will help them if they have any difficulties. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives and are keen to participate in sports activities. They understand well about healthy eating. For example, those in the breakfast club knew the benefits of the eggs they were having, courtesy of the school's chickens.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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
<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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Assessment information is used accurately to plan lessons and track pupils' progress. Lessons are exciting and engage pupils' interest. Relationships with pupils are outstanding and behaviour is managed well overall, so that learning is calm and orderly. Classrooms are organised carefully to support learning, for example through displays. Small-group teaching in lessons and withdrawal work in separate bases makes a highly effective contribution to pupils' progress. On occasion, whole-class phases of lessons, such as discussion, do not fully meet individual pupils' needs, notably those with significant special educational needs or the more able. Sometimes too little is expected of pupils in thinking independently about moving their work forward and they depend too much on the staff. Marking and verbal feedback give good guidance for improvement. A wide range of visits, visitors and resources such as the school grounds enrich pupils' experiences. The school has put much emphasis on developing early literacy in recent years and is well focused on taking this further. Themed activities reinforce learning by making connections between subjects, which pupils enjoy. However, these activities are not always linked precisely enough to developing key literacy skills. Strong links are made to the local area, including to the Brighton Festival. The expressive arts feature strongly in the curriculum and pupils show sensitivity in exploring creative processes. A wide range of extra-curricular activities contribute to pupils' enjoyment and those in sport reinforce messages about how to lead a healthy life. Pupils welcome the many well-planned opportunities to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. Care and guidance are skilfully targeted where pupils are vulnerable or at risk. The school works closely with external

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partners such as social services to support pupils and families. Staff monitor carefully the progress of each child and adjust support as required. While some pupils continue to need significant help in managing their behaviour, very many pupils turn a corner and progressively develop good attitudes to learning. Exclusions rarely occur, attendance has followed a sustained upward trend, and many pupils speak of how they cannot wait to get to school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	2
<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>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders and managers are a cohesive team, inspired by the headteacher. They are passionate about the school and its community and have high expectations. Priorities for improvement are defined well through good evaluation. Action to bring change is pursued with energy and the impact is monitored well. Staff in lead roles are supported well and good steps are taken to engage a wide range of staff in taking forward aspects of the school's work. The impact made by the school on the achievement of different groups of pupils is checked carefully, including by the governors. They are a committed group, with good levels of expertise, who are not afraid to challenge the staff whilst also supporting them. Effective engagement with parents, carers and the local community reflects hard work by a wide range of staff, including a community liaison worker. They put on an imaginative programme of activities to help parents and carers get involved in supporting their children. Parents at an art workshop spoke highly of such provision. The school's positive approach to promoting community cohesion extends to making links with other schools in this country and overseas, as reflected in its International School Award. Safeguarding the pupils is given a high priority. Procedures are reviewed regularly and the school balances carefully the need to offer exciting experiences to the pupils with also keeping them safe.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>2</b>
	2
<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>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although few reach the expected development levels when joining Year 1 because of their low starting points. Language and communication, alongside personal, social and emotional development, remain key weaknesses. Children settle quickly and high levels of care ensure that they are happy. Good transition arrangements include home visits made by staff, and visits by children to the setting. There are a good range of self-selected and adult-initiated activities. The outdoor area offers particularly good opportunities for learning and is well resourced and inviting. Sharing this between Nursery and Reception classes allows younger children to get to know Reception staff. The children's progress is tracked carefully and regular assessments are completed. Most teaching is good, albeit with more consistently effective practice in the Reception class. The better teaching makes good use of assessment information to plan learning which challenges each child. However, sometimes the planning of activities from which children can choose is not sharp enough to guide them toward the next steps in their learning. Leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and have worked hard to bring about improvement. There are good plans for further developments, including forging closer ties with the Children's Centre so as to support children at an earlier stage.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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



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The response to the questionnaire was very supportive of the overall effectiveness of the school and the efforts it makes to involve parents and carers in their children's education. The overwhelming majority of them felt their children were making enough progress. They took a particularly positive view of the quality of care provided, and that their children enjoyed attending school and felt very safe while there.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moulsecomb 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 396 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	62	14	30	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	62	13	28	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	51	19	40	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	51	18	38	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	60	16	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	55	16	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	26	33	70	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)	19	36	26	55	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	47	20	43	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	45	17	39	6	13	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	40	23	49	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	24	51	17	36	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	61	13	28	1	2	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

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

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

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

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

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



29 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moulsecoomb Primary School, Brighton BN2 4PA

This letter is to thank you for your help during our recent inspection of the school and to tell you what we found out. The school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education overall but has some strong features.

- Many of you said how much you enjoyed school and that you were keen to get there in the mornings.
- The staff take good care of you and help you behave well. You told us that they were always there to help you if you had any worries.
- We were impressed by how many of you wanted to help around the school, for example by being on the school council or helping at break time, or showing us around.
- The school provides a lot of interesting activities, including taking you on visits, bringing visitors in, or using the school grounds or the computers. Most of you told us that you enjoy the topic-based work that you do.
- Lessons are usually interesting and the staff are good at helping you learn. They give extra help to those of you who need it, often in small groups or for just one of you, and this works well.
- The headteacher and the other staff work hard to improve the school. They also work hard to help your parents and carers get involved in your learning.

I have asked the headteacher to add the following ideas to his plans for the future:

- In some parts of lessons, the activities you do are too similar when they could be varied depending on how good you are at the activity. Sometimes you are not asked to think enough for yourselves about how to improve your work, and you can help with this too.
- When you are doing topic work, you should be asked to think as hard about your literacy targets as you do in literacy lessons.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes sometimes need more help choosing activities which will help them learn as much as possible.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Long Her Majesty's Inspector

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