

Fairlight Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114487
Local Authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	357556
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Christine Jones

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kaye Dawes
Headteacher	Damien Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons and saw 17 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's priorities, analysed recent evidence on pupils' performance, read 64 parental questionnaires as well as staff and pupil surveys.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- Achievement and pupil outcomes.
- Attendance and the impact on outcomes.
- The impact of behaviour on pupils' learning.
- The suitability of the curriculum to meet pupils' needs.

Information about the school

This is a large city centre primary school with a varied and mobile pupil population. ♦ Pupil movements in and out of the school vary from year to year but in some year groups as many as a fifth of pupils did not join this school in the Reception Year. ♦ The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average as is the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A third of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and many are at the early stages of speaking English with up to 32 different first languages.

The school has gained accreditation for speech and language development in the Nursery as well as silver Artsmark award and Foundation Level International Schools award.

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

Fairlight Primary and Nursery School is a good school with a number of considerable strengths. The care guidance and support provided for every pupil are excellent, particularly for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils whose individual circumstances make them more vulnerable. The school never gives up on a child. As one parent said, 'The school has pulled out all stops to help my child reach and go beyond my expectations of how much they could achieve.' Parents, carers and external agencies are engaged in close and successful partnerships aimed at making sure all are involved in contributing to the pupils' learning, well-being and development. The school maintains a successful role as a centre of the local community where all groups within the area can meet and work together to enhance the locality.

The school works effectively to tailor provision to meet pupils' many and varied needs. The result is that teaching is consistently good in all classes and pupils are enthusiastic and motivated by their learning. Therefore all groups of pupils achieve well, both academically and socially, regardless of their individual circumstances. Attainment, although below national averages at present, is improving in all year groups as the effective actions implemented by senior leaders to tackle underachievement are beginning to pay off. This represents good progress as many pupils come to the school with starting points that are significantly below the levels expected for their age.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and appreciate the way the school looks after them. As one pupil said, 'I like the way they help us with our work, and when we are sad or scared they help us'. As a result of an interesting curriculum and good range of additional learning opportunities, pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and pupils work and play well together. Exclusions are rare. Many pupils come to school regularly and attendance is satisfactory overall. However, in spite of the school's best efforts some parents do not ensure their children attend school regularly and this prevents them from learning and achieving as well as they could.

The school is determined to keep a close watch on the progress each pupil is making and has introduced very effective monitoring and tracking systems that are clearly understood and used by all managers and teachers. Individual teachers make good use of this information in planning their lessons. Pupils' books are marked regularly but marking sometimes does not give pupils, particularly older ones, enough clear guidance on the standard of their work and how it might be improved.

The drive and determination of the headteacher and senior leadership team have created a clear and ambitious vision for the future direction of the school. Everyone in the school community is committed to this vision and this has created good capacity for sustained improvement. To enhance this, the governing body has recently been re-formed and

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reorganised to involve them more closely in supporting the work of the school and keeping it under review. Currently this aspect of governance is underdeveloped.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment through:
 - working with parents to ensure their children attend school regularly
 - informing pupils, especially older ones, more clearly about the standard of their work and how it could be improved.
- Strengthen the strategic participation of the governors so that they are able to take a full part in evaluating, challenging and continuing to improve the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils achieve good outcomes in this school. Teachers provide interesting resources which stimulate learning and keep pupils engaged with their work. Pupils work together very effectively; they keep on task, plan their work carefully and really enjoy the opportunity to discuss their work with their 'talk-partners'. They respond well to teachers' questions, particularly where these really probe their thinking and understanding.

At the end of Year 6 in 2010 pupils reached below average standards in English and mathematics. Nevertheless this represents good progress as their standards on entry to the school were significantly below those expected for their age. Standards in English and mathematics are improving in all other year groups and this means that, as pupils move up into older year groups, the progress they are making is accelerating. Pupil mobility is high with pupils leaving and new ones entering the school on a regular basis. The school supports the new pupils well and helps them to make good progress especially those who may come with specific difficulties such as speech, language and communications needs.

Pupils feel secure and appreciated because they are treated as individuals. They are certain that bullying is extremely rare and any incidents dealt with very effectively. Pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable feel special at this school. They are learning how to cope with their own problems and make sure they do not interrupt other pupils' learning. Overall, pupils develop the good basic skills that they need to be successful in the next stage of their learning. Pupils' social development is good and they are keen to contribute to the school community and take part in the good range of activities provided outside of lessons. For example, breakfast club is very popular and well organised with a good range of activities for pupils to take part in as well as eating toast! Celebration of the diversity of the school community is an essential characteristic of the school and this enhances pupils' cultural development. Pupils respond well to the calm and positive learning environment the school creates. They say the school expects them to be 'more mature' and they try their best to behave in this way.

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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	3
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	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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching and learning are based on well-prepared planning that enables both teachers and the skilled learning support assistants to build carefully on pupils' prior learning. Pupils with different levels of prior attainment and different learning needs are challenged effectively by the tasks they undertake. Teachers and learning support assistants make effective use of questioning to really get under the skin of what pupils have learned and help deepen learning. Good lessons are practically based and proceed at a brisk pace. For example in a numeracy lesson on coordinates pupils made good progress through their enjoyment and engagement with a pirate map game looking for the hidden treasure. ♦ Lessons are well balanced so that pupils not only learn something new, but also have the chance to consolidate and practise their skills.

Where pupils have specific needs, especially those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, they try hard not interrupt the learning of others. They are given considerable support by skilled staff to help them learn to manage their issues themselves. ♦ All staff understand clearly the importance of using information from the effective assessment and tracking systems to support learning, and individual progress is reviewed regularly. ♦ Informative and regular marking helps teachers with this process although it does not always give quality guidance to the pupils.

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The curriculum has a clear focus on improving pupil outcomes through responding to the needs of the learners. The newly formed curriculum teams are raising the profile of their subjects through themed weeks such as the 'Brainiac' week taking place at the time of the inspection. The extra support built into the curriculum for individual pupils is resulting in some of them making outstanding progress.

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 headteacher has played a decisive part in lifting expectations among staff, pupils and parents. This is strongly supported by all leaders of learning and managers in the school and has led to good and, in some instances, outstanding improvement. The school's innovative focus on family development and inclusion work has had a direct impact on improving family engagement with the school. This has also had a positive effect on improving pupils' attendance and attainment. This work makes a major contribution to the school's vigorous and thriving contribution to local community and beyond as well as the success with which equality of opportunity and overcoming any form of discrimination is promoted. The school is a leader of high-quality practice in ensuring the safety of its pupils. Examples from the school's work in this area are used regularly by other schools as exemplars of good practice. Monitoring of the school's work is robust and thorough with detailed tracking and analysis of performance. Outcomes are used effectively to improve teaching and learning and set well-focused and challenging targets. The governors fully back the school in all its activities but they recognise the need to improve their involvement in challenging the school and checking on its work. Excellent strategies used by the school to promote community cohesion result in pupils in this diverse and vibrant community growing up with a first-rate understanding of life in a multicultural society both in Britain and beyond.



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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	1
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	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision for children throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children's skills are significantly below the expected level for their age when they start in the Nursery, particularly in their personal and communication language skills. The early years team prepares the children well for starting Nursery, including visiting them at home and building positive relationships with children and their parents.

The flexible session choices the Nursery offers to parents have enabled more children to benefit from a nursery place. Children are happy and settle into school quickly, including those who join the Nursery or Reception classes at different times of the year. They make good progress in their ability to share and play with each other and by the time they transfer to Year 1 they have become confident when joining larger groups. Children make steady progress in other areas of learning supported by the adults who work diligently to extend and develop their communication and listening skills. Team planning and the organisation of key workers for each child are strengths of the organisation. This enables parents and carers to link up with the person who can tell them most about their child's progress.

Children enjoy their activities, including in the well-used outdoor areas. Effective support, for example in role play areas, develops children's speaking and listening skills. The staff involve the children in talking through the activities they can choose and this helps to develop the children's independent planning skills. More use could be made of focused questions to develop children's subject specific vocabulary skills. The team prepares learning plans for those individual children who need them and the pastoral care for these very young children is outstanding. Leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective with a strong emphasis on teamwork to make sure all staff agree what they want the children to learn, and in ensuring the learning environment is exciting and lively. As

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one happy parent said, 'My son's confidence has grown considerably since attending Fairlight.'

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive in their responses to the questionnaires and generous in their praise of the school. All agreed that their children enjoyed school, made good progress and were very well cared for and kept safe. A very small minority felt that the school did not keep them up to date with how well their child was doing at school or give enough advice on how they could help, views not endorsed by the inspection. However, all agreed that they were happy with their child's experience in the school. Parents who were interviewed during the inspection were equally positive about the school. For example, a parent was delighted with the improvement in her child's language skills and behaviour after only three weeks in the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fairlight Primary and Nursery 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 352 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	70	17	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	70	17	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	51	26	46	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	54	25	44	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	75	14	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	63	18	32	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	53	25	44	1	2	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)	26	46	29	51	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	56	25	44	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	39	31	54	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	53	26	46	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	79	10	18	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	65	19	33	0	0	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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">■ 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 pupils' 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.



25 November 2010



Dear Pupils



Inspection of Fairlight Primary and Nursery School , Brighton and Hove BN2 3AJ



I am writing to thank you for your help when we inspected your school and to let you know what we found out. We enjoyed seeing how you work in lessons and talking to your parents. We worked very closely with your headteacher and other teachers as well as meeting a school governor. ♦

Fairlight is a good school in very many ways.

- The school takes excellent care of you and makes sure you are very safe.
- Your teachers are good and work hard to make sure your lessons are interesting and exciting.
- Staff in the school get lots of help to make sure you get support at times when you are struggling with your work or perhaps feeling a bit sad.
- Your behaviour is good ♦ well done! You like taking part in school activities together outside of lessons.
- You are making good progress in your work in all year groups although for some of you the standard of your work could be better and you could come to school more regularly.
- Many of you come from different countries all over the world and you all get on really well as you try to understand each other's point of view.
- Your parents really like your school and are very happy with your education.

You have played an important part in helping the school to improve and you can continue to help by working hard and coming to school as often as you can. We have asked the teachers to help with this by giving you more guidance on how well you are doing and what you need to do to make your work even better. We have also asked the school governors to be more involved helping to improve the work of the school.



Thank you again for the help you gave us.



Christine Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

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