

Cradle Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114434
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	357537
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Robin Gaff

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Rollings
Headteacher	Gianni Bianchi
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2007
School address	Lexden Road Seaford BN25 3BA
Telephone number	01323 892773
Fax number	01323 898084
Email address	office@cradlehill.e-sussex.sch.uk

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St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 20 lessons, observing all 15 teachers present in the school during the inspection at least once. Inspectors held meetings with staff, pupils, members of the governing body, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at planning and evaluation documents. They scrutinised the school's own analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. A total of 134 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were received and analysed, as were questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- How effective are measures taken by the school to improve pupils' progress, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- What impact is the developing curriculum having on the achievement and personal development of all groups of pupils?
- How accurate is the school's evaluation of teaching and assessment?
- To what extent are partnerships having a positive impact on pupils' learning and well-being?

Information about the school

Cradle Hill is much larger than the average primary school. The number of pupils on role has risen significantly since the last inspection. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is smaller than that found nationally. An average but increasing proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These cover a wide range of additional needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has recently gained the 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

Cradle Hill is a good and highly inclusive school which has built on the strengths that were identified by the last inspection. Its growing reputation has led to an increase in the number of pupils who come from outside its immediate locality and the school has coped well with this expansion. Many parents and carers comment on how happy their children are and how much they enjoy coming to school. One parent, whose remarks were typical, said both her children 'like Cradle Hill so much they would happily come in the holidays!' Children make an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff provide them with a very wide range of interesting and exciting activities which fire their imagination and make them want to learn.

Pupils feel extremely safe in school because they are valued and made to feel welcome and know who to approach if they have any concerns. They show an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle through their enthusiastic participation in a wide range of sporting activities and through their contribution to improving the quality of what they eat and drink at lunchtime. The school cares for its pupils exceptionally well, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff work closely together, as well as with parents and carers and a very wide range of outside agencies, to ensure that pupils' individual needs are clearly identified and appropriate support is provided.

The school has identified and firmly addressed the causes of the overall dip in pupils' achievement represented by their results in the 2009 national tests. It has strengthened its procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, ensuring that those who are at risk of underachieving receive the additional support they need. As a result, pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are once again making good progress and their levels of attainment, which are broadly in line with national averages, are rising. The quality of teaching is good and there is outstanding practice in both the lower and upper parts of the school. Teachers know their subjects well and establish a good environment for learning in their classrooms. They give pupils regular and detailed feedback so that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to meet their targets. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows because teachers do not check pupils' progress often enough during lessons so that they can vary activities if necessary. The school has extensively developed its curriculum so that it now provides an excellent match to pupils' interests and abilities. Trips, visits and special events enrich pupils' experience by enabling them to make links between different areas of learning such as history and information and communication technology (ICT).

The headteacher and staff have worked extremely effectively to engage with all groups of parents and carers. Good partnerships with other providers have enabled pupils to make smooth transitions between different stages of their education and benefit from the

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expertise of staff in other institutions. Pupils develop their understanding of life elsewhere in the world through the strong relationships that have been established with schools in Africa and elsewhere in Europe. They have fewer opportunities at present to learn about different lifestyles in other parts of the United Kingdom. The headteacher and senior staff rigorously and accurately evaluate the school's performance, and their development planning represents a clear vision for future improvement. They recognise the need to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by giving teachers more opportunities to observe one another's lessons. The governing body knows the school well and is prepared to hold leaders robustly to account, for example, with regard to the achievement of and provision for different groups of pupils. These factors, together with the positive outcomes of initiatives that leaders and managers have implemented since the last inspection, confirm the school's good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress by ensuring that all teachers:
 - check pupils' progress sufficiently during lessons in order to vary the pace and range of activities where necessary
 - have more opportunities to observe outstanding practice within the school.
- Give pupils more chances to learn about life in other parts of the United Kingdom.

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

Pupils join the school in the Reception class with skill levels that are lower than age-related expectations. Their attainment, as represented by the results of national tests taken at the end of Year 6, is broadly average and rising. Although pupils' progress dipped in 2009, especially in English, the school has successfully addressed the factors that caused this temporary decline, and all groups of pupils now make good progress. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning in the classroom and relate well to their teachers and to one another. They enjoy working in pairs and in groups and develop good cooperative and problem-solving skills which will serve them well in the future. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the high quality support they receive in mainstream classes and in small group and one-to-one sessions from teaching assistants and specialist teachers. Pupils' good behaviour in lessons contributes well to their learning. On the few occasions when they become distracted and do not work as hard as they could, this is usually because the activities they have been given are insufficiently challenging. Around the school, they behave sensibly and very safely, and are courteous and helpful to one another as well as to visitors. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community by, for example, taking an active interest in local environmental issues. They raise money for a range of charities, and help to support pupils in a school in Ethiopia. Pupils develop a sound understanding of the different cultures represented in the United Kingdom. In their considerate behaviour, and the way they respect and value those who have different background or abilities, pupils show that they have taken to heart the school's motto, 'Be kind'.

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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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

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?

Teachers ensure pupils know at the start of lessons what they are going to learn as well as what they are going to do. They make use of a good range of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers show good expertise in different subject areas. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson on light, pupils gained an excellent understanding of the difference between 'transparent' and 'translucent' because of the teacher's clear and confident explanation and illustration of these characteristics. Most lessons provide pupils with an appropriate level of challenge but, on a few occasions, teachers do not take sufficient account of pupils' varying responses to modify activities so that all pupils make at least good progress.

Pupils benefit from an extremely broad and well-balanced curriculum which meets the needs of different groups, including those of pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented, as well as the small number who are learning English as an additional language. Their understanding of different cultures around the world is successfully fostered by the school's links with different countries in Europe and Africa, and by the opportunity enjoyed by pupils throughout the school to learn Spanish. Pupils benefit from practical activities in lessons, such as going outside during mathematics lessons to measure playground objects and areas. Enrichment events, such as 'Creativity Week,' develop pupils' ICT skills extremely effectively by enabling them to record and broadcast their own radio programmes. An exceptionally wide variety of well-attended after-school clubs promotes

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pupils' cultural, social and physical development by catering, for example, for their musical, artistic and sporting interests.

The school ensures that pupils, including those who join the school at other than the normal time for transfer, settle in quickly. It implements very effective arrangements when pupils move up to the next year group by making sure that their new class teachers are well aware of their interests and different stages of development. The school ensures that parents and carers are kept well informed of pupils' progress as well as of any difficulties they may encounter. Many parents and carers compliment staff on their approachability and helpfulness, as well as on the way teachers and other staff know their children as individuals and understand their needs. The support the school gives to potentially vulnerable pupils such as looked-after children, who are helped to overcome the barriers they face and make good progress from their starting points, is exceptional.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his senior staff are passionately committed to improving outcomes for all groups of pupils. They continually monitor pupils' progress and modify the provision, for example, by supporting individuals and groups themselves, where appropriate. The governing body includes a good range of experience and expertise and has established strong links with parents and carers and the local community. It rigorously evaluates its own performance as well as that of school leaders. The school works well with a range of local organisations, including community groups, early years settings, other local primary schools and the secondary school to which most of the pupils transfer. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including vetting the appointment of new staff and carrying out regular risk assessments, are robust. The school's commitment to and success in promoting equality of opportunity are demonstrated by its strong focus on the performance of groups within the school and the good achievement of potentially vulnerable pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The rarity of racist incidents and the school's firm and effective response when they do occur illustrate its determination to tackle discrimination. The school is a happy and harmonious community. Its successful development of pupils' understanding of cultures elsewhere in the world has been recognised by its achievement of the International Schools award. It is currently implementing plans to broaden pupils' awareness of ways of life in other areas of the United Kingdom.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's attainment by the time they complete the Early Years Foundation Stage has risen in recent years and is now above average. This represents excellent progress from their starting points in terms of their development of a wide range of skills. Staff visit children's homes and the pre-school settings they attend and give parents and carers, as well as the children, many opportunities to get to know the school. This enables them to ensure that children settle in very quickly and happily when they join the Reception class. Children benefit from an excellent blend of adult-led and child-initiated as well as indoor and outdoor activities. Their behaviour and ability to play safely together are outstanding. They learn to cooperate with one another and enjoy developing their practical skills by, for example, taking turns to use wheeled toys on the ramp which they have built themselves. Children make excellent progress in linking letters and sounds as staff make very good use of resources such as puppets to engage their attention and maintain their interest. Staff make sure all children are included in activities by using techniques such as 'whisper to your partner' in pair work. They assess children's work frequently and use their observations to plan activities which correspond very well to children's interests and their levels of attainment. Leaders show an exceptionally good understanding of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, for example, in their development of assessment systems for the full range of children's skills and knowledge. They ensure that all the adults in the setting work extremely well together for the benefit of the children.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was broadly in line with that found nationally. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at the school. None expressed any concerns about the ways in which it keeps their children safe, and almost all reported that their children were happy and that the school helped them to be healthy. Many parents and carers commented positively on the way the school cares for and supports their children, and on the quality and frequency of communication from the school, including concerning their children's progress. Almost all believe the school is well led and managed. Most parents and carers believe that teaching is good and that their children are making enough progress. A very small minority of the questionnaires received included critical comments. Many parents who responded took the time to express in detail their approval of and support for the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cradle Hill Community 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 134 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 422 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	103	77	30	22	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	112	84	22	16	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	78	58	53	40	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	63	44	33	2	1	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	94	70	36	27	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	88	66	38	28	5	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	85	63	46	34	1	1	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)	79	59	44	33	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	81	60	50	37	2	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	70	52	52	39	9	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	46	65	49	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	101	75	30	22	2	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	103	77	28	21	2	1	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 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cradle Hill Community Primary School, Seaford BN25 3BA

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We all enjoyed meeting you and hearing what you had to tell us.

We think yours is a good school which makes all its pupils feel welcome and looks after them extremely well. Pupils in Reception get off to a great start to their education because the staff know them very well and give them interesting and exciting things to do. Many of you say how much you enjoy coming to school. You feel very safe there because you know who to turn to if you need help. You behave well and you really do know what to do to keep healthy. Well done! You reach the levels expected of you in your work and you make good progress, including those of you who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because teachers usually give you work which is well suited to you and they make sure you know what to do to reach your targets. Special events like 'Creativity Week' give you an excellent chance to learn in new ways and you can choose from an extremely good range of out-of-school activities. The skills you learn will stand you in good stead later in life. You get on well with one another and you learn a lot about different ways of life in other countries.

The headteacher and all his staff, as well as the governors, are working hard to make the school even better. To help them to do this we have asked them to do the following things:

- Help you to do even better by making sure all the teachers check your progress regularly during lessons and by giving them more chances to watch one another teach.
- Give you more opportunities to learn about life in other parts of this country.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff

Lead inspector

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