

Storrington First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125874
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	381144
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Surtees
Headteacher	Garry Smart
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 December 2008
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Age group	4–10
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. During the inspection, 18 lessons and ten teachers were observed. Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body, parents, carers and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, provision for those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the governing body minutes. In addition, questionnaires from 81 parents and carers, and others from staff and pupils, were analysed.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for assessment in providing for pupils' individual needs, and the level of achievement of the more able pupils.
- Pupils' personal development and the effectiveness of the school's measures to enhance their cultural development.
- How well the curriculum, and extra-curricular activities, contribute to overall outcomes for pupils.
- In the light of the school's self-evaluation, how effectively leaders and managers at all levels, including the governors, are enabling the necessary continuity and improvement.

Information about the school

Storrington First is a two-form-entry, above-average-size school in a rural location with spacious outdoor areas. Most pupils are local to the school, living in the village. The vast majority of pupils have White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. These needs include behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.

The school has achieved the Artsmark Gold 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Storrington First School provides an outstanding education for all of its pupils. Staff take great pride in the displays of pupils' artwork around the school, which are of a very high standard, and praise and encourage pupils for their many achievements. Many parents remarked on how welcoming this makes the environment in the school. The staff's rigorous monitoring and clear self-evaluation, and their track record of employing initiatives over many years to enthuse pupils and treat them all as individuals, have also contributed to the pupils' excellent progress. These factors, and the many developments since the last inspection, illustrate the school's excellent capacity for continuing its improvement. One parent, reflecting the very positive views expressed by the majority of parents and carers, wrote, 'Great school that the headteacher has completely turned round. All the teachers are approachable and committed.' Another parent wrote, 'The school is excellent at involving the children in decisions that affect them. My child is respected and valued as an individual.'

Very effective organisation and careful assessments enable children to make excellent progress immediately in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This start is built upon extremely well so that, by the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment is consistently well above expectations for their age, and often high. In 2011, pupils at the end of Year 2 reached levels that were well above average, and in line with the school's records and expectations. The more able pupils are enabled to achieve exceptionally high standards. By ensuring an excellent quality of help from very well-qualified teaching assistants wherever it is needed, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve similarly well.

Pupils' personal development and their wider educational outcomes are excellent, which helps their all-round achievement, both academic and personal. Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic learners. They are proud of their school. They work very hard and progress outstandingly well. They acquire a detailed understanding of safe and healthy choices and make an exceptional contribution to the school and wider community. Attendance is high, as pupils enjoy all their time at school. Pupils' excellent behaviour and their keen appetite for teamwork, together with their outstanding skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage in their learning.

Safeguarding procedures are excellent and pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times. A huge range of additional activities, visits and visitors

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enhances the outstanding curriculum. Although there are minor variations, the overall quality of teaching is outstanding. Planning is thorough and based on the use of careful assessments. Through their innovative research teams involving all staff, the school has identified the need to share the outstanding practice of all of the teachers through coaching and mentoring in order to raise the overall quality consistently to that of the best.

Storrington First is truly a school of its community. The contribution of the Friends Association is greatly appreciated by all involved. There are very rewarding partnerships with many organisations in the local area, and with other schools and businesses. The excellent quality of these many links, such as the wonderful community kitchen, is testament to the school's outward approach to learning and community cohesion. As a result, pupils' awareness of, and preparation for, living and working in a culturally diverse Britain are being developed extremely well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use the school's current management systems to raise the quality of each lesson to that of the best by extending opportunities for staff to observe and share the outstanding practice in the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Observations of lessons during the inspection confirmed that, throughout the school, all groups of pupils make excellent overall progress, regardless of their background or ability. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are generally in line with those expected for their age. The outstanding progress in the Key Stage 1 classes is firmly based on meeting individual pupils' needs. This success is built on exceptionally well in Key Stage 2. In all lessons, behaviour is impeccable and pupils acquire excellent skills and working habits, working either independently or with their classmates. These factors help to create the high-quality climate for learning that was evident in all classes.

Teachers provide interesting resources that enthuse pupils and keep them engaged in their work. When pupils are asked to work together, they do so very effectively. They keep on task, challenge each other and plan their work carefully. Pupils enjoy working independently, and respond well to teachers' questions, particularly where these really probe their thinking and understanding. There is a high level of achievement across a wide range of subjects. For instance, art and music are strengths of the school. As the award of the Artsmark Gold testifies, pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents. The standard of singing witnessed during the inspection by the large choir was outstanding. One of the most striking features that the pupils displayed, at all times, was the caring way they took notice of each other and applauded all successes.

Given that pupils' level of well-being and personal development is outstanding, it is

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not surprising that throughout the school relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and contribute to the positive ethos for study. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, contributing to their excellent behaviour.

Pupils show very caring attitudes to each other and the environment. They know there is always someone they can turn to in moments of difficulty. Pupils were keen to share with inspectors how much they enjoy the responsibility of the school council or buddies with pupils in other classes. Their few complaints about others’ behaviour show how high their expectations are. The pupils’ very high level of enjoyment in their learning is reflected in their high rates of attendance and excellent punctuality. As one pupil said, ‘This school is awesome, I love working here.’

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Observations of teaching confirmed that throughout the school, pupils make excellent progress, regardless of their background or ability, because of the very effective approach adopted by teachers. In all lessons, pupils are well motivated by the ideas and resources presented through an exceptionally well-thought-out curriculum and are keen to please their teachers and other adults. This was evident in an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 2, where the teacher’s provision of different levels of challenge and probing questions inspired unrelenting cooperation and effort from every pupil. As in most lessons, the pupils could hardly wait to share their thoughts and ideas.

¹ 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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Teachers’ use of the individual and group targets is excellent and they always take the chance to reinforce, during lessons or through their marking, what the pupils need to learn next when the opportunity arises. The insights that pupils reflect on in their learning journals shows how effective this approach is. Through the intervention of some pupils with the headteacher the school has invested in many laptop computers and the outcome is a very high level of expertise in ICT.

In all the lessons observed, the careful planning was implemented with enthusiasm and care. This was clear in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, where the teacher provided many different examples of digital and analogue clocks to focus the pupils. The pupils were enthusiastic and spoke confidently in assessing their own and others’ work. The teacher’s good use of praise and attention to detail was a reflection of the way in which in almost every lesson teachers take all learning opportunities that arise. The impact of the school’s outstanding support, guidance and care is evident in the pupils’ excellent standards of behaviour and in their exceptionally strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

Outstanding leadership, drive and ambition over a number of years have raised the school’s achievements from satisfactory to good, and now to outstanding. The reflective way the whole staff now approach improvements and adaptations ensures their excellent capacity to improve. The extremely effective leadership team and governing body have changed in the last three years to include groups, known as research teams, working together on carefully identified priorities. All staff are involved and this ensures that complacency is not tolerated. Teamwork is excellent and everyone, including the business manager, administrative team and caretaking staff, are considerable assets to the school and are very much appreciated by all concerned. As one staff member said, reflecting the views of all, ‘I love working here – a challenging, creative and supportive environment.’

The school knows itself very well and sets the right targets to become even better. Documentation is impressive and the evaluation of the school’s work is honest and accurate. The very effective governing body is fully involved in this process, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where necessary. It holds the school to account in a challenging, but supportive, manner.

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Excellent attention is paid by staff at all levels to ensure the highest quality of safety and care for the pupils. There are, for example, thorough procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school. Pupils’ safety and well-being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place to be. The staff are effective in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination for all pupils across all aspects of the school’s work. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is excellent and pupils have a wide understanding of different international faiths and cultures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
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	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make an excellent start to their education in the Reception classes. The huge level of commitment and care shown by the teachers and all the staff is evident in the way that all children settle into the school so well and immediately begin to learn. Induction meetings enable the staff, children and their families to get to know each other and help make sure that starting school is a happy event. These visits lead to the full involvement of the local community that continues right through the school. As one parent said, ‘I feel that the Reception class team of teachers is excellent. Weekly letters home to parents and everything about the unit is so in tune to the ages and stages of children starting school.’

Staff know the children very well and they ensure that the least able and most vulnerable progress well. All children are given a real sense of determining their own way forward, which guarantees their full involvement in all activities. The way that children decide what they want to do, get out the required equipment and get on with their task is excellent. The fact that they could say why they had made their

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choices was inspiring.

Children make rapid progress and achieve exceptionally well, especially in communication, language and literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Adults have high expectations, provide very clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships. At all times, the class teachers engage and stimulate the children’s interests. The enjoyment and concentration of the children, as they focused on different artists like Mondrian and Matisse, helped others in the ‘Post Office’ or chose how much detail to include in their stories, were particularly impressive. The classroom is stimulating and resources are used exceptionally well as children move from one activity to another. The outstanding outside area provides the same exciting level of challenge and stimulation, especially for the more capable children.

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 level of return of questionnaires from parents and carers was below the national average. The overwhelming majority of these parents and carers, and those who spoke to the inspection team, were very happy with the school. They consider that the school has a dedicated team of staff and that the headteacher leads and manages the school very well. They agree that the school has a very warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and the overwhelming majority agree that their children make good progress. Parents and carers were particularly impressed with the pastoral support their children receive. Inspectors fully endorse these views. Although there were a very small number of parental anxieties over most questions, the way the school deals with any disruptive behaviour was a particular concern. This issue was fully shared and discussed with the headteacher and governors. Inspection evidence shows that these misgivings, while understandable, are unnecessary, and are well understood by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Storrington First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 301 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	80	16	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	70	23	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	47	58	33	41	0	0	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	63	27	33	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	69	25	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	50	62	25	31	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	62	29	36	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)	42	52	31	38	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	53	65	25	31	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	40	34	42	11	14	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	51	33	41	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	70	21	26	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	60	74	18	22	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



4 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Storrington First School, Storrington RH20 4PG

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed our time with you and would now like to tell you what we found out about your school. We agree with what those of you we spoke to told us – Storrington is an excellent school. These are the main reasons why we thought the school was so good.

- You make outstanding progress and really try hard at all times. We were very impressed that you knew what to do to make your work even better.
- You all make an excellent start in the Reception classes.
- We saw that you know you are especially lucky to have so many different activities both during and after school.
- Your headteacher and staff do a super job in organising the school.
- You all really enjoy being in school. Many of you try very hard to help others.
- You behave exceptionally well, work hard and listen carefully to your teachers. All of this helps you to succeed.
- All the adults in the school look after you very carefully. They always make sure that you get help if you need it.

Even in outstanding schools there are some things that can be even better. We have asked your teachers to share their ideas so that no matter which class you are in, all your lessons are as good as the best. In turn, you must all carry on listening carefully and take note of what your teachers say. Then you will all continue to make the best possible progress in your learning.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall
Lead inspector

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