

Carlton Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114381
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	395697
Inspection dates	12–13 July 2012
Lead inspector	Wendy Forbes

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Hadley
Headteacher	Louise Willard
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 June 2009
School address	Sussex Street Brighton BN2 9HS
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Wendy Forbes

Additional inspector

Stephen Armstong

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed seven lessons taught by seven teachers, amounting to approximately four-and-a-half hours in total. This relatively small number of lesson observations was due in part to a number of enrichment events, such as the school's 'Olympic One World Week' celebrations and out-of-school visits taking place during the inspection. Additional visits to classes focused on provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and included visits to three small-group support or intervention sessions. For almost all of the observations of teaching and learning, and throughout the scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher and a member of the leadership team. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, members of the governing body, and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, listened to pupils reading and looked at self-evaluation documentation, monitoring and assessment information, lesson plans and policies. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and analysed questionnaires from 102 parents and carers and 97 pupils. The school's safeguarding procedures were evaluated.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. All year groups, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, have single-age classes. The largest group of pupils are of White British heritage, with the rest representing a wide range of other ethnic groups. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Their main needs are emotional, behavioural, and speech and language.

The school meets current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has recently achieved a number of awards, including International Schools and Eco Schools Green Flag, and has enhanced Healthy Schools status. It runs a daily early morning breakfast club, which formed part of the inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Pupils receive exceptional care and support, which parents and carers agree helps pupils to achieve well. The school is good rather than outstanding because there are occasions when a few teachers do not effectively use information about how well pupils are doing to provide activities that fully extend and challenge every individual, particularly the more able, in developing their mathematical skills, especially mental calculations. Progress in mathematics is, therefore, sometimes slower than in reading and writing.
- Consistently good and often outstanding teaching ensures pupils are motivated and enthusiastic in their learning. Lessons are planned well and the pace of learning is good. Teachers use demonstration, explanations and questioning well to promote good learning and to engage pupils. All this means that pupils achieve well, including those children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and particularly in reading in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding. The school provides well-tailored support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils' awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, and respect for diversity, are promoted well. Very effective partnerships enhance pupils' learning and help them to succeed.
- Senior leaders are ambitious for the school. The headteacher provides clear leadership and educational direction. She is very well supported by other key leaders. Leaders and staff promote good achievement and good behaviour. Well-established procedures for the management of performance set the direction and give impetus to improvement. The school has improved its overall assessment tracking systems. However, across the school, the use of the information gathered by individual teachers is not always consistently used to ensure all pupils do their best.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly for the more able, by July 2013 by:
 - ensuring that the level of challenge in all lessons is matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able
 - ensuring that all teachers consistently and effectively analyse and use information about how well pupils are doing in mathematics to plan lessons and activities that match the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that daily work offers enough challenge to develop pupils' mathematics skills, especially mental calculations
 - providing more targeted staff development in order to strengthen the teaching of mathematics.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children's skills on entry to Reception are well below those expected for their age, particularly in speech and language, and calculations. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of consistently good teaching, exceptional care and the efforts staff go to, to ensure that the individual needs of children are supported well. By the end of Reception, children have made good progress and their attainment in most areas of learning is close to that expected nationally.

Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum ensure all pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. Pupils enjoy their learning. This view is endorsed by the vast majority of parents and carers who said how pleased they were with their children's current progress and desire to learn. The quality of learning and progress seen in lessons is typically good and often outstanding. Enthusiastic teaching and pupils' positive attitudes towards learning contribute well to pupils' good progress. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils enjoyed the teacher's energetic presentation, bringing alive their knowledge of shapes and developing understanding of relevant properties. Well-focused questioning helped pupils to understand the application of shape in our everyday lives.

Across the school, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make equally good progress as their peers because their needs are carefully assessed and they receive well-targeted individual or small group support. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because staff make suitable adjustments to materials and activities to meet their learning needs.

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Improvements in reading attainment have been built on since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading is broadly average and improving rapidly. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in reading is above average. It is average in writing and below average, but rapidly improving, in mathematics. This is the result of consistently good and often outstanding teaching, and a successful focus on the development of literacy skills over time. Systematic and successful teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 ensures children make good progress in developing early reading and writing skills. Overall, English and mathematics have not improved at the same rate because work is not always as well matched to pupils' differing needs, particularly those of the more able. Gaps between boys' and girls' attainment in mathematics in some year groups are now narrowing rapidly because of the specific, well-targeted support and improvements in target setting for individual pupils, which has had a positive impact on their achievement.

Quality of teaching

Good and often outstanding teaching promotes enjoyment and good learning. Teachers set well-defined objectives so lessons have a clear purpose and pupils know what they are expected to learn. Success criteria effectively guide pupils' learning. Teachers constantly check pupils' understanding and provide opportunities for pupils to explain concepts and ideas. Enthusiastic explanation and good questioning, a common strength of teaching, ensure pupils know how to achieve success. Pupils have many opportunities to work collaboratively and to discuss their learning in pairs. This has a positive impact on their oracy skills.

Teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively to ensure lessons are well planned and provide stimulating, first-hand, often memorable, experiences. Pupils described their excitement as they were 'shipwrecked' on the school field. Working proactively in teams, they used their construction skills to build shelters, and their knowledge and understanding of compass points to pinpoint their location in order to be rescued. As one pupil told the inspector, 'You never know what to expect. Teachers always make our learning fun.' These experiences contribute significantly to the successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is successfully organised. Teachers plan suitable work to help these pupils to progress well. Teaching assistants have clear guidance about what they are helping pupils to achieve. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are provided with an appropriate range of support and activities to ensure they achieve equally well. Consequently, many pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable overcome barriers to learning.

Most parents and carers stated their children were well taught. Examples of outstanding practice were seen in mathematics in Year 5 and in literacy through the teaching of letters and sounds in Year 1. In these lessons, the teachers' high expectations, enthusiasm, strong subject knowledge and challenging activities led to

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outstanding gains in pupils' learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a good balance of adult-led activities and those initiated by the children. Children have good opportunities to explore, be creative and learn independently. Children enjoy opportunities to investigate the world around them, as seen in a Reception class as excited children cared for newly hatched chicks.

The very effective teaching of letters and their sounds is supported well by learning programmes, such as 'Reading Recovery'. This helps to ensure pupils develop reading skills rapidly. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to develop their mental calculation skills. Not all work set presents an equally effective challenge to enhance learning, particularly for the more able in mathematics. Work is regularly marked and information is systematically gathered about how well pupils are doing. However, not all class teachers use this information effectively to provide a suitably challenging range of mathematics activities.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated by good, sometimes outstanding, behaviour both in lessons and around school, and by improved, now above average, attendance and positive attitudes to learning. Pastoral care and support, a strength of the school, helps pupils to develop good personal skills and to feel safe. Exemplary efforts are made to understand pupils' needs through providing effective support, such as mentors and counsellors.

Almost all parents and carers who completed the questionnaire believe that their children feel safe at school and that they are well looked after. Pupils said that they feel very safe and that behaviour is typically good. Records of incidents confirm this. Most parents and carers believe that the school deals with bullying effectively. Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including persistent name-calling, cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying relating to race. They know the steps to take to prevent bullying. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about disruption to learning in lessons. Pupils affirmed that the good behaviour seen first-hand during the inspection is typical and how they appreciated the effort the school makes to involve them in the management of their behaviour. As one pupil said, 'We understand why it is important to behave well. It is sometimes hard work to earn rewards for good behaviour but if we earn enough, we have a great pyjama party as our reward.' For individuals who find difficulty in conforming to the school's high behavioural expectations, the school employs relevant strategies, including calling on the expertise of external individuals or agencies. These actions are usually most effective in resolving difficulties.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and staff have created a positive school ethos where all groups of pupils learn and develop well. There is a strong shared sense of purpose to take achievement forward. Through accurate self-evaluation, the school has a clear overview of its performance and takes positive action to bring about continuing

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improvements, as seen in the sustained improvement in reading and in the strengthened teaching of writing. Senior staff, particularly those who lead key subjects, are effectively involved in monitoring and improving their areas of responsibility. Professional development and training are linked closely to the school's improvement priorities, such as literacy and numeracy. Procedures for the monitoring and development of teaching contribute well to the good and often outstanding practice.

A creative curriculum promotes good achievement and personal outcomes for pupils. It meets the needs of pupils well and plays a major part in engaging them in learning by providing memorable experiences, such as the 'Shipwreck' topic and historical theme days. It is enriched by specialist teaching, including in music and sport, and visits, and further enhanced by special events and awards, such as the 'Soundmakers' Project, the school's 'Olympic One World Week' and its International Schools and Eco Schools Green Flag Awards. These learning opportunities greatly promote pupils' awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, and respect for diversity. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination effectively tackled. The school strives to ensure that all pupils achieve equally well. As the school logo states '...fair means that everyone gets what they need, not that everyone gets the same'.

Members of the governing body have a good understanding of the school's performance. They are actively involved in the life of the school and provide support and constructive challenge. There are rigorous procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment, which meet statutory requirements, including careful checks on adults and a planned approach to managing the safety of pupils.

Parents and carers appreciate the school's support for their children and the effort to ensure that families are actively involved; they had much praise for both the Family Learning Programme as well as the 'Super Dads' course.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



17 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carlton Hill Primary School, Brighton BN2 9HS

Thank you for making the inspection team feel so very welcome when we visited your school last week. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you all and hearing about what you enjoyed most about your school. We were particularly impressed with your 'Moving Sounds' performance and the 'One World' song you composed and sang in your special assembly. You have worked hard to improve your reading, and enjoy a wide range of interesting activities, including the popular clubs and the various music and drama performances and sporting events.

I am pleased to tell you that you go to a good school. You and your parents and carers told us that you like school and that it is a happy place where you feel very safe. You are well behaved and we were impressed with the efforts you make to get on with each other. Most of you are making good progress in your work and you are taught well. Your headteacher, staff and governing body are determined to help you succeed. They know how to make sure that your school continues to get even better and we have asked them to do the following:

- Ensure that all of you make faster progress in mathematics by asking your teacher to use the information about how well you are doing to provide work that ensures just the right level of challenge for each of you, and particularly for those who can learn quickly.
- Give you more opportunities to practise your mental mathematics skills.
- Make sure more of you benefit from stronger mathematics teaching.

All of you can help by continuing to try hard in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Forbes
Lead inspector

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