

Telscombe Cliffs Community Primary School

Telscombe Cliffs Way, Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven, BN10 7DE

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures. It is not good because

- Senior leaders have not been effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
- The improvement in standards in writing and mathematics has been too slow and pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills in science or geography lessons.
- The overall quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. This results in uneven progress for pupils.
- Weaknesses in teaching identified at the previous inspection have not been tackled effectively. Some teachers still do not provide activities for pupils that are matched to their needs, particularly for the less able pupils.
- When senior leaders ask teachers to work on improving an aspect of their practice, they do not go back to see whether the weakness has been tackled.
- School leaders are not self-critical enough and have an over optimistic view of the strengths of the school.
- School development plans are not sharp enough.
- The governing body is not well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and does not challenge school leaders effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are polite and courteous to adults and each other.
- Attendance is above average.
- Teachers manage behaviour well so that little time is wasted in lessons.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that any form of bullying is dealt with promptly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons taught by 16 teachers. Five lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They attended an assembly and visited the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Inspectors considered the 71 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and took into account the school's recent internal survey of parents and carers. They also talked informally to parents as they arrived to collect their children at the end of the school day.
- Meetings were held with the co-chair of the governing body, individual teachers, senior staff and groups of pupils.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school's records of pupils' attainment, their progress, attendance and behaviour; the work pupils were doing in their books; improvement planning and self-evaluation; records of monitoring; key policies; and minutes of the governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Melanie Knowles, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jackie Krafft	Her Majesty's Inspector
Carol Vant	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Telscombe Cliffs Community Primary School is much larger than the average sized primary school.
- A very large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or need extra help with their learning is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with a statement to support their learning is in line with that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium (additional government funding) is below average.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club. These were visited as part of this inspection.
- There is an on-site nursery that is privately managed which was not included in this inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by making sure that:
 - teachers have sufficient subject knowledge in writing and mathematics to be able to adapt plans and respond quickly to pupils' needs in lessons
 - the pace of lessons is always good, pupils are engaged in their work and are moved on quickly to their next steps in learning
 - teachers ask questions that deepen pupils' understanding and involve pupils of all abilities
 - pupils have more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects
 - all pupils make good progress from their starting points by setting work that always matches their needs and abilities, especially for the less able pupils, disabled pupils and those who need extra support with their learning.
- Improve the impact of leaders and managers by:
 - ensuring that plans for improvement include regular opportunities to check and measure the impact of the action taken
 - making regular checks on the quality of teaching and ensuring that points for improving teaching are followed up with teachers
 - developing the skills of all staff with leadership roles so that they can contribute fully to making the school better
 - making better use of information about pupils' progress and attainment to accurately evaluate what works well and what needs to be improved
 - providing the governing body with accessible information about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement so that it can fully understand the school's strengths and weaknesses in order to better hold leaders to account
 - undertaking an external review of governance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 dipped to below average levels in 2011. Teaching is not strong enough to sustain the improvement seen in the 2012 end of Key Stage 2 results. Many pupils do not write fluently or confidently. Despite plenty of opportunities to write, pupils' progress in writing is compromised as some teachers do not have enough subject knowledge to develop pupils' writing skills effectively.
- There has been little improvement in mathematics since the previous inspection. This is because fundamental weaknesses, such as teachers' subject knowledge have not been addressed. The school has identified that pupils need more practice with quick mental calculations, and teachers have begun to plan regular sessions to work on this, but it is too early to see the impact on standards.
- Overall, the rate of pupils' progress in writing and mathematics remains patchy as seen in lessons and pupils workbooks.
- Pupils of varying abilities say that they are usually given different tasks to do in lessons, but feel that the work is still sometimes too easy. Inspection evidence confirms this view.
- Disabled pupils and those who need extra help with their learning make uneven progress. While specialist help is used well to support pupils in small groups, progress slows when pupils are back in class because teachers do not always plan activities that meet their needs.
- The majority of pupils eligible for support from additional government funds make good progress because of the targeted one-to-one or small group support provided for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading has a high priority in the school. Children learn letter sounds in the Reception year and most can blend sounds effectively to read unfamiliar words by the time they leave Year 2. Pupils read regularly in school and have access to a good range of reading materials. As a result, attainment in reading has risen since the previous inspection and is now above average at the end of Year 2.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Weaknesses in teaching over time have limited pupils' achievement so that standards are not as high as they should be. In some lessons seen during the inspection, work set was either too difficult or too easy for different groups of pupils. One reason for this is that several teachers have moved to teach in a different year group and they are still adjusting to meeting the needs of older or younger pupils. Elsewhere in the school, teachers' planning shows that they provide different levels of work for pupils in all lessons, but the less able pupils are sometimes given work that is too hard and they struggle to complete this even with help.
- The pace of learning in some lessons is uneven. Often, a quick introductory activity starts the lesson well, but the pace drops when the teachers talk for too long and pupils are not actively involved.
- Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not always use the information they gain from observations well enough to help them plan the next steps in children's learning.
- Pupils particularly enjoy lessons when teachers make links between subjects, for example between English and history. Although most teachers provide opportunities to solve number problems in mathematics lessons, pupils do not often practise their mathematical skills in other subjects such as science or geography.

- The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is generally good and most teachers use the marking system consistently. However, older pupils are not always given time to respond to the comments or questions that teachers write in their books. In contrast, younger pupils have target cards in their books which are referred to regularly and help to ensure that they know their next steps in learning.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers adjust their plans to provide the best opportunities for pupils to learn. They ask questions that get pupils thinking and ensure that pupils of all abilities can be involved in the lesson. For example, in one lesson in which the class was reading *Goodnight Mr Tom*, some pupils were not able to use clues in the story to understand how characters were feeling. The teacher read a section of the book aloud and then explained how the author had dropped hints about the characters' feelings from descriptions of their gestures and facial expressions as well as their speech. After reading another page of the book aloud, she asked different pupils to contribute their ideas about another character's feelings. Pupils gave thoughtful responses and pupils of all abilities were confident to try out ideas and join in.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are eager to do well in lessons. If they finish a task early, they often ask the teacher what they should do next and are happy to settle down to more work.
- In lessons seen during the inspection, behaviour was consistently good. Even on occasions when the pace of learning dropped or when pupils sat on the carpet for too long listening to the teacher, the vast majority behaved well. Pupils say that behaviour has improved and is usually good in lessons and around the school.
- Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and manage behaviour consistently well. Younger pupils are taught to repeat the teacher's chant of '1, 2, 3... eyes on me' and stop their activities immediately when they hear this. This means that little time is lost in lessons waiting for pupils to stop work or change to a new activity.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive and pupils say they are confident to approach their teachers or other staff if they have a problem. Pupils report that bullying, in any form, is not tolerated and that if it occurs it is dealt with quickly. The school's written records confirm this. Parents and carers are not as confident as their children that instances of bullying are followed up effectively. The school is aware that it needs to do more to reassure parents that procedures are rigorous.
- Pupils confirmed that they feel completely safe in school. They are taught how to keep safe and healthy and show a good level of understanding of possible risks they may encounter.
- Attendance is above average and pupils arrive at school on time.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The headteacher has not been successful in driving significant and sustained improvement in teaching and achievement since the previous inspection. While the headteacher and other senior leaders are committed to providing the best for pupils, they are not sufficiently self-critical and have an inaccurate view of how well the school is progressing. Planning to bring about improvement is not sharp enough. Standards have not risen quickly enough since the previous inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2, because teaching is not good enough.
- Senior leaders have not been effective in improving the quality of teaching. Although they visit lessons regularly and give detailed feedback to teachers, they do not follow up on agreed actions to bring about improvements. When judging the quality of teaching, senior staff do not give enough consideration to evaluating the amount of progress that pupils make in lessons or over time. As a result, some teachers have an inaccurate view of their overall performance.
- Subject leaders and other leaders with responsibilities are not able to make a full contribution to improving the school because they need intensive support to guide them in their role. Others are

new to the school and any sustained impact from their work has yet to be demonstrated. Consequently, the pace of improvement in writing and mathematics has been too slow.

- Until very recently, the effectiveness of support for disabled pupils and those who need extra help in lessons had not been evaluated. As a result, the uneven progress they make has not been recognised, challenged or rectified.
- The procedures to appraise teachers' performance were too lenient until very recently and this allowed teachers to progress to higher salary grades without ensuring that they met high standards in their teaching. This does not represent good value for money.
- The school works in close partnership with other local schools in the area and some joint activities have proved to be successful in developing teachers' skills in assessment. The National College of School Leadership provides a suitable level of support to improve leadership skills. The intensive support provided for some leaders has led to some improvements in practice, but the impact of these changes has not been sufficient to accelerate pupils' progress enough.
- Pupils study the full range of subjects over the course of a term, but long-term plans show that less time is allocated to subjects such as art or geography. Topics such as 'Life in Kenya' enable pupils to learn more about other cultures and support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School policies aim to provide all pupils with equal opportunities. The deputy headteacher tracks the progress of different groups of pupils such as the small number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, the gifted and talented pupils and those children who are looked after. These pupils reach similar standards to their classmates and are not disadvantaged in relation to other groups of pupils as they progress through the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - the governing body does not have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Although the senior leaders provide large amounts of information on pupils' performance, this is not presented in the format of a clear analysis of what is going well and what still needs improvement
 - the governing body does not have enough understanding of how school leaders judge the quality of teaching and it does not oversee the performance management of any staff except the headteacher
 - without clear targets in the school's plans or milestones for when these will be achieved, the governing body has struggled to hold school leaders to account for the progress that pupils make. As a result, it has not had enough impact on raising standards. For example, the governing body knows how the Pupil Premium funding has been spent but not whether it has made any difference to the progress made by the groups of pupils for whom it is intended.
 - the governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114420
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	401431

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	518
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Hill and Bob Soper-Dyer
Headteacher	Gill Webb
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 January 2010
Telephone number	01273 583113
Fax number	01273 589564
Email address	office@telscombecliffs.e-sussex.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012