

West Hove Infant School

Portland Road, Hove, BN3 5JA

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress throughout the school and at the end of Year 2 reach above-average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. This level of performance has been consistent since the previous inspection.
- Children in the Reception classes settle in quickly and make accelerated progress in all areas of learning because of the excellent support they receive.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to that of their peers.
- Teaching across all year groups is typically outstanding. Teachers plan lessons that are fun and so pupils relish learning. Teachers are exceptionally good at identifying the personal and learning needs of all pupils. They ensure that work is matched closely to their individual needs, but opportunities to develop pupils' creative thinking skills and for them to think critically for themselves are not always fully exploited.
- Pupils get on with each other extremely well and enjoy all aspects of the school. They have exceptional behaviour for learning because of the school's caring and supportive ethos. All pupils report that they feel cherished and safe.
- Pupils receive outstanding support both within and outside of the classroom by skilled teaching assistants.
- The headteacher is inspirational and has the highest aspirations for the pupils. She is ably supported by two dynamic deputy headteachers who have a relentless drive to further improve the high standards of the school. The senior leadership team play a pivotal role in shaping the continued success of West Hove in ensuring outstanding achievement and teaching.
- Parents have a very positive view of the school and wholeheartedly would recommend it to other parents.
- Governors know the school well. They are highly experienced in their role and bring a high level of support and strategic vision to the school. They are diligent at looking at data to track pupils' progress. They monitor assessments of the performance of teaching so as to make sure that the school sustains its success.
- The school is used by the local authority as an exemplar of best practice.
- Pupils' enjoyment of the school is reflected by their consistently above-average attendance, which continues to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 38 lessons and part-lessons, including 14 shared observations with the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors heard children reading and scrutinised work in books.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, school staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 186 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They spoke to parents who requested a meeting, read letters and also interviewed parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and analysed a large range of documents and policies, including the school’s own data on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documentation and records relating to behaviour. Safeguarding documents were also scrutinised.
- The views of staff were analysed through the 66 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
John Stewart	Additional inspector
Fiona Robinson	Additional inspector
Gillian Keevill	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- West Hove Infant School is much larger than the average infant school. Since the previous inspection it has expanded and now operates on two sites. Pupils attend either Portland Road or Connaught Road.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is lower than the national average. Pupil premium is additional funding for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services. Currently there are no pupils from forces families on roll.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average, as is that of those who speak English as an additional language.
- There is a before-school club that is run by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more opportunities for pupils to extend their creative thinking skills and ability to think through matters critically for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Typically, children start school with skills and abilities which are well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in communication and language skills. Pupils settle quickly and happily into school because of the care that the teachers and support assistants give in making sure all of their individual personal and learning needs are met. Parents were highly complimentary about the induction process and the experience of the first few months of school. As one parent said, 'The school does all the extra social treats that make the world of difference to a five-year-old's experience of big school.'
- Pupils make outstanding progress in the Reception class because teachers are aware of exactly the point each child has reached in learning. For example, many children were working at a high level in phonics (the sounds that letters make), correctly writing and spelling many words and even attempting to spell words such as 'satsuma'.
- Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to make exceptional progress and they leave Year 2 with standards well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been the picture since the previous inspection.
- Those who are more able make exceptional progress because of outstanding teaching. The proportions reaching the higher levels by Year 2 are typically twice the national average.
- All groups make outstanding progress, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for the pupil premium. Data from the current year show that those who are eligible make better progress than their peers in reading and similar progress to them in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' reading skills build rapidly as they move through the school. They read confidently and fluently, using their phonics skills to work out how to read unfamiliar words. The Year 2 phonics reading retake showed standards well above the nationally expected standard.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils' writing is of a high standard and all use punctuation and paragraphs correctly. There are abundant opportunities for writing for different purposes, from the Reception class throughout the school, and this enables pupils to achieve outstanding results. An example of how teachers fire pupils' imaginations for writing was when the school was transformed into an airport. Pupils had to make passports, go through customs and then board an airplane in the hall.
- Pupils make excellent gains in their understanding of mathematics because they receive a thorough grounding in basic numeracy. For example, most pupils in Year 2 can rise to the challenge of halving and quartering numbers with three digits.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Excellence in the quality of teaching at this school underpins pupils' outstanding achievement.
- The school has developed and refined a system for learning that maximises progress. Each lesson is split into several parts punctuated by 'brain breaks' where pupils move about or think about something else. This enables them to stay well focused and keen to learn more. Teachers constantly encourage pupils to talk and listen to each other's views and reflect on their own learning. By this method pupils are developing their own sense of how well they are learning from early on in Reception.
- Children in the Reception classes thoroughly enjoy their learning. Teachers want the very best for the children and this is evident from the planning stage of learning activities through to delivery. Both teachers and support staff successfully ensure that children become ceaselessly inquisitive.
- Teachers use data on the progress and attainment of each pupil exceptionally well. They plan interesting and stimulating activities that fully challenge all pupils to do their best. Lessons proceed at a fast pace because there are clear learning objectives conveyed to the pupils, and

teachers are able, by careful targeted questions, to enable pupils to make outstanding progress. There is always a good variety of practical activities. Across the school, teachers show great flair in engaging all pupils, including the most able, to learn independently and enthusiastically.

- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' successful learning. They are highly skilled and work with specific pupils who they know very well. They use imaginative and supportive strategies to help pupils learn.
- When teachers mark books and set targets for pupils to achieve, there is always a very high expectation that pupils can achieve even more.
- In all year groups, teachers' enthusiasm and dedication to getting pupils to achieve their best have a very positive impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning because lessons are such fun. They explore the curriculum on a 'magic carpet of learning'. Pupils are always attentive and ready to learn at the beginning of every lesson. They demonstrate high levels of perseverance, even when working on their own.
- The school's ethos celebrates each child as an individual. In every class there is a box called the 'wonderful world of me', where each child creates a treasure chest that celebrates her or his uniqueness and skills; they then share it with the rest of the class. This technique also enables teachers to plan learning that matches pupils' interests.
- Exemplary behaviour makes the school a happy and calm place. Pupils are always friendly and polite. They show respect, care and consideration for each other and staff, reflecting the courtesy shown to them by all staff. Behaviour is consistently very well managed, which makes a strong contribution to a positive climate to learning. Pupils understand the rewards and sanctions well and are keen to please.
- Pupils show a very good understanding about bullying and the different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying. Incidents such as name calling or unkind behaviour are extremely rare and if these do occur pupils are confident that staff would deal with issues immediately. Equality of opportunity is well promoted and records show that there have been no recent incidents of bullying, racism or discrimination.
- Pupils feel extremely safe and well looked after. They like attending the before-school club and trust the staff, knowing they always listen if there are any problems.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View or who spoke to inspectors state that the school does all it can to ensure the well-being of their children. Parents are very supportive of the school and help in many ways, including helping to run a half-termly Saturday school for those who are more able, where skills such as creative problem solving are developed.
- Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual into school and lessons.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The outstanding headteacher expects pupils to achieve to their highest potential, and they respond very well. The strengths of the headteacher's leadership are complemented by two deputy headteachers who aim to build further on what are already high standards. As the headteacher says of them, 'Their commitment and skills go beyond anything I could have hoped for.' This exceptional senior leadership team share a vision in shaping the continued success of the school. The school's impressive track record of teaching and achievement confirms its capacity for sustaining such outstanding performance.
- Leaders below senior level are also very accomplished. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Teachers come from other schools to see how these leaders teach and fulfil their responsibilities at West Hove.
- Leaders have an in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and areas to continue to

improve. Since the previous inspection, this pursuit of excellence has sustained high levels of achievement for all groups of pupils and exemplary attitudes to learning.

- A comprehensive performance management process is firmly established. All leaders regularly check the quality of teaching, and staff benefit from extensive training opportunities, including the development of leadership skills. There are close links between performance management and professional development which ensure that only the best teaching is rewarded by additional pay.
- The local authority recognises the strengths of the school and, consequently, provides limited additional support. It is used as an example of best practice to other schools.
- The large majority of parents who responded to Parent View or who spoke to inspectors during the inspection agree with inspection findings that leadership is outstanding.
- The exciting curriculum is enhanced by additional subjects such as French. The school is exploring creating more opportunities for pupils to extend their creative thinking skills and ability to think through matters critically.
- The school already has excellent provision for sports development, including a swimming pool at the Portland Road site. The impact of the new sports funding is designed to have a beneficial effect on all pupils' well-being with more specialist provision. However, it is too early to evaluate the full impact of these initiatives.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly experienced and bring to the governing body a depth of knowledge in education. These skills enable them to very effectively hold leaders and the school to account for pupils' achievements. They are regular visitors into school, observing lessons and talking to teachers and leaders as well as checking pupils' work in books. They are well trained and use data on pupils' progress and attainment very effectively to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium funding, are making the same outstanding progress. The report that evaluates the effectiveness of the pupil premium funding is exceptionally thorough. Finances are very well managed. Governors know what the quality of teaching is and make sure that teachers are rewarded for their skills in enabling pupils to make progress and achieve the results they do. Governors ensure safeguarding meet statutory requirements and ensure that a comprehensive system monitors and tracks all safeguarding issues so that the designated officer can take immediate action if necessary.

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	114428
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	426652

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	666
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Whippey
Headteacher	Wendy Harkness
Date of previous school inspection	February 2008
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