

Telscombe Cliffs Community Primary School

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

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although improving rapidly, teaching is not yet consistently good.
- Pupils' progress in all subjects, including English and mathematics, varies too much throughout the school.
- Some lessons, and the pupils' learning within them, proceed too slowly.
- The work set for higher-attaining pupils is not difficult enough.
- Pupils know their letter sounds (phonics) but younger pupils cannot always blend them well enough to read words quickly and correctly.
- Pupils do not improve their work enough after it has been marked by their teachers.
- In the Reception classes, boys achieve less well than the girls.
- The school is developing quickly an exciting curriculum in all subjects, but this is yet to be fully established or have a marked impact on pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is well led by the headteacher and senior staff. The school has real vitality and energy, and is improving quickly.
- Middle leaders, including subject leaders, have improved their work massively. As a result, pupils now enjoy interesting and deeper work across many subjects.
- Parents and carers are increasingly involved in, and pleased with, the work of the school.
- The governing body, following a recent successful reconstitution, is doing a good job.
- Pupils entitled to the support of the pupil premium funding, as well as those with special educational needs, achieve as well as their classmates.
- Pupils are looked after well, feel safe and their behaviour is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons, across all classes, some jointly with senior staff. The lead inspector had also done this on previous monitoring inspections.
- In addition, inspectors observed two assemblies. They talked to pupils from all year groups, heard some pupils reading, scrutinised pupils' work in several subjects and looked at teachers' planning, marking of work and assessments.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated school documents including improvement plans, minutes of meetings, reports about the school and information about pupils' progress in English and mathematics.
- Inspectors took close account of parents' and carers' opinions through 85 returns to the Parent View questionnaire on the Ofsted website and from the school's own recent questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Barnes

Seconded Inspector

Janice Williams

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average primary school, serving a coastal area.
- Before this inspection, the school had four monitoring inspections while in special measures, led by the same lead inspector, who is one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).
- The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and supported by additional government funding from the pupil premium is about average.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, requiring some extra help, is about average. The proportion of pupils needing further support, from external agencies, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is also average.
- In 2013, the most recently published results, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sharpen and ensure the improvements to teaching now make maximum impact on pupils' learning by:
 - raising the level of challenge for higher-attaining pupils
 - ensuring teachers check all pupils' understanding before moving on to the next part of a lesson
 - increasing the pace of lessons, and pupils' learning, where this is too slow
 - improving the teaching of phonics, particularly so that younger pupils can blend letters better to read whole words accurately and quickly
 - ensuring pupils follow up teachers' marking comments to bring quicker improvements to their work.
- Continue to develop the school's own initiative to increase the breadth and depth of the curriculum through, for example:
 - developing the successful use of 'learning journeys' across the school by linking them yet more closely to the specific needs of the pupils and the community
 - improving the provision for boys in the Reception classes
 - adding to the repertoire of singing for all pupils
 - analysing more fully the impact of sports activity on all pupils' participation in sport, and the quality of their physical activity.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is improving in all subjects. However, it is not yet good because there remain too many inconsistencies in how well pupils achieve across the school.
- Pupils' work, over time, in English and mathematics, and their 'learning journeys' which focus on other subjects, show that pupils cover a wide range of interesting work, but the pupils' learning is not always deep enough in every subject.
- For example, the school is aware that pupils' progress is not strong enough in several subjects and year groups, such as reading in Year 2 and writing in Year 4.
- In some cases, pupils' knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar is not fully applied in their writing. Although pupils' writing is improving, it is generally weaker than their work in other core subject areas.
- Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, in Year 6, is about average, as it was last year. Most pupils have made the expected progress.
- Too often, though, pupils who are capable of higher attainment do not always do as well as they should. Throughout the school, too few pupils attain at the higher levels in English and mathematics.
- Pupils show pride in their work. They present it neatly and their letters are correctly formed.
- The school takes equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination seriously. There is no gap at all between the attainment of pupils entitled to the support of the pupil premium and others. Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs make progress in line with that of the others.
- In the Reception classes, pupils' attainment shows improvement from that of last year's cohort, but senior staff have noted correctly that girls do better than boys and that this gap remains too wide.
- Many pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils know letter sounds well and can break words down into their constituent sounds. However, those who read to inspectors often could not blend them together to make unfamiliar words. They did not do as well as pupils at the last monitoring inspection. A Year 1 pupil, trying to sound out the word 'mine', recognised the 'magic e' and knew the individual letter sounds but nevertheless could not read the word.
- In the Foundation subjects, beyond English and mathematics, pupils' achievement is mixed but clearly improving. Pupils are learning more deeply as a result of improvements in the work of subject leaders.
- Pupils sing together increasingly accurately and well. They are learning to use notation to improve their performances and musical understanding, although, as yet, there is not a wide enough repertoire, with too much focused on pop styles.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Senior leaders and staff have worked successfully to develop and improve many aspects of teaching. Teachers mark pupils' work in similar ways in all classes and have all worked to improve their use of questioning.
- Teaching is not yet good because there remain too many inconsistencies in the quality of lessons across the school. Improving teaching remains a work in progress.
- Teachers usually explain the purposes of lessons clearly, so pupils know what they are expected to learn about. However, during these same lessons, teachers do not always check carefully enough that all pupils have learned what they need to before moving onto the next stage of the lesson. Consequently, gaps develop in pupils' understanding.
- Teachers get on well with their pupils, but sometimes the pace of pupils' learning is too slow.

- The school assesses pupils' progress regularly and organises data about this very clearly. The data are not always well enough used in English and mathematics lessons to provide work which is challenging to all. The expectations of staff are too low for higher-attaining pupils. For example, in a lesson about adverbs, all pupils carried out the same task and many could already do what was expected. For higher attainers, there was nothing to stretch or improve their understanding.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed, with parents and carers involved productively. Tasks for these pupils are much more often well related to their needs.
- The work of teaching assistants is carefully planned and helps pupils to focus on their tasks.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and helpfully, although pupils do not respond quickly enough to the teachers' comments, to improve their work. This has also fallen back since the last monitoring inspection.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified that there is a need to improve the teaching of phonics, so that pupils can apply their knowledge of letter sounds more quickly.
- In the Reception classes, teachers use their day-to-day assessments of children aptly to plan learning activities. However, this is not yet done quite precisely or sharply enough to make the children's learning good. Staff used assessments ineffectively from the children's nursery provision to inform their initial planning. This had the effect of reducing the expectations of how well the children should do.
- In some better lessons, teachers think very precisely about the methods they choose, and why. For example, in a successful Year 3 mathematics lesson, the teacher gave responsibility to the pupils in carrying out an investigation about capacity. The teacher then successfully linked their work to real life by showing, in a humorous way, how getting this wrong could lead to badly prepared food. Pupils enjoyed this and all learned well.
- In foundation subjects, beyond English and mathematics, teaching has improved, along with the curriculum. Inspectors observed some good learning in art, geography and history lessons, for instance.
- Nevertheless, teaching quality in foundation subjects remains inconsistent. In an outdoor physical education lesson, pupils spent far too long sitting still and listening. When they started to practise some throwing skills, the teacher did not explain how the skills might be used in a game and pupils had no opportunity to apply this learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are keen to participate in lessons and work well individually and together. They listen well to their teachers and are mainly polite, helpful and considerate. They speak to each other, and to adults, confidently and respectfully. They wear their uniforms smartly, showing pride in their school.
- In the playground, and around the school, pupils are usually sensible and behave safely. They like the playground equipment and the way that adults sometimes lead their play. Pupils play well together. Any with disabilities are fully included, so that the disabilities hardly show. Pupils feel comfortable together. Pupils about to leave say they will miss the school.
- Occasionally, pupils become restless in lessons when the teaching loses pace and challenge. At these times, they can lose focus and their minds wander, but they do not become disruptive.
- There have been a small number of fixed-term exclusions earlier this year. However, serious behaviour incidents are declining in frequency. The school cares for the pupils involved well and has developed some successful strategies to re-engage and motivate them, celebrating their achievements.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school has appropriate procedures to safeguard the pupils, and staff are suitably trained in these.
- The pupils who met with inspectors showed good knowledge of how to keep safe, including on the internet. They understand the different types of bullying. They said that it is rare in the

school and dealt with quickly by staff. They appreciate the opportunities they have, in class circle time, to share and discuss any concerns.

- Attendance is above average. There are a few persistent absentees but there are no groups of pupils whose attendance causes concern. The school has well-organised procedures for encouraging good attendance, helped by pupils' enjoyment of increasingly exciting school days.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher gives very clear, enthusiastic leadership. He knows what is needed, sets clear direction, and encourages staff and pupils very effectively to achieve shared goals. He is well supported in this by senior staff.
- Senior leaders have worked tirelessly to remove longstanding weaknesses in the school, identified at the last full inspection. This has involved changing embedded but weak practice and rebuilding new approaches in some key areas, including even the staff dress code.
- As a result, the school is improving well. It is an exciting place to be. Staff feel well supported in developing their work. Governors describe this as a 'step change'. The parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire would all recommend the school to others.
- The school improvement plan is well constructed and effective. As it is only written for this school year, it does not incorporate longer-term objectives which have, in fact, been identified. Rightly, the school plans to rejuvenate and extend the scope of the improvement plan in the early autumn.
- Senior staff and governors generally evaluate the school accurately. On occasion, they have observed that the school is improving but have not noted as clearly how the school is actually performing against national benchmarks at that time. Just occasionally, they have thought the school might be better than it is.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified that the curriculum in the Reception classes has been more engaging to girls than boys. They have begun to help and guide the staff to balance this by increasing the number of topics which are enticing to many boys.
- The work of subject leaders, right across the curriculum, has improved hugely. As a result, the curriculum is broad, balanced and increasingly imaginative. Along with assemblies, it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development appropriately. But there is still more to do to build up the depth and rigour in each subject. The school rightly sees this as an important priority and wants to improve further the relevance of the curriculum to the school's particular community.
- The local authority's work with the school is useful and has improved.
- Pupil premium expenditure is particularly well targeted and evaluated. The school models some especially good practice in its use of the pupil premium.
- Pupils enjoy participation in many sports activities and often do well in inter-school events. Primary sport funding is appropriately spent, but the school has not yet clearly identified the impact it has on pupils' participation in sport, performance levels and healthy lifestyles.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has improved its work and makes a very positive contribution. Its recent restructuring has ensured that it covers all its duties aptly, through a well-organised committee system, and that new governors are suitably inducted. The Chair leads the governing body astutely. Governors receive appropriate training. The governing body is given useful and detailed reports about the work of the school, including teaching and pupils' progress. Its members ask increasingly helpful and challenging questions. Working with the headteacher, governors have ensured that staff performance management procedures, including those for the headteacher, are correctly organised and carried out in a timely fashion. Staff are held clearly accountable for the progress of their pupils. No longer are any staff members paid for duties they do not fully perform.

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	441605

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	538
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Hill
Headteacher	Darren Vallier
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 October 2012
Telephone number	01273 583113
Fax number	01273 589564
Email address	office@staff.telscombec cliffs.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 and 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 2014

