

# Slinfold CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125995
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	315389
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Kelsey HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	127
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Muller
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jacqueline Lamb
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	The Street Slinfold Horsham RH13 0RR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01403 790253
<b>Fax number</b>	01403 791408

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small primary school is organised into five mixed aged classes. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average, their needs ranging from physical disability to specific speech and language or learning difficulties. Pupils are almost all of White British heritage. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language.

There are strong links with a local independent school to which some of the pupils transfer at the age of eleven. With the local secondary school, the school shares a French teacher and makes use of the science facilities and a science teacher from a local independent school. The school gained eco-status in 2007 and the national Healthy Schools and Investor in People awards. It works closely with local schools on a sustainability project.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether the achievement of pupils is at least satisfactory or better throughout the school and across all subjects; whether Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes are as strong as the provision suggests; and whether the right actions are being taken by the leadership team to ensure inconsistencies are eradicated and standards are continuing to rise. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own self-assessment, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school because the leadership and management are good. It has brought about effective change by identifying the correct areas, such as improving teaching and raising standards. As one parent said, 'Children flourish in this environment because it encourages children to be so caring about each and every child at the school.'

Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to eradicate its inconsistencies in teaching. Its good links with local schools both from the maintained and independent sector have enabled the school to draw on a wide range of expertise to give greater depth to some subjects such as music, physical education, information and communication technology (ICT), science and French. The capacity for further improvement is good. The majority of parents have confidence in the school and its leadership and choose to send their children here. As another parent wrote, 'It is particularly good at giving practical interpretations of lessons such as the topic on Romans which included Roman baths, Roman weddings and lots more.'

Standards are above average and this represents good progress over time from when pupils start at the school with broadly average abilities. There is a wide range of abilities and needs across the school and the school is popular because it can offer good support, in small classes, to those pupils who find learning more difficult. In some year groups, the number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is over one third of the class, which is above the national average. One parent said that she 'would praise the school for its special needs provision and for its small class sizes and additional teaching assistant support'. The school also caters well for the more able pupils. In the last two years, more pupils have reached the higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 6, so that this proportion is now above average.

Pupils make good progress across all stages and at times classes are split into smaller teaching groups so that teachers can focus on teaching core skills to similar ability groups. This focus on the needs of pupils, and through the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and set teaching groups, has helped improved standards further in the last two years. The school's targets for test results for Year 6 were exceeded in 2007 and on present teachers' assessments are likely to be exceeded this year too. However, while standards are above average, the school rightly recognises that it has more to do to ensure that standards are as high as they can be.

Pupils progress well because teaching and learning are good. Pupils identified as having specific needs make equally good progress at the school. Many are doing better than pupils with similar difficulties nationally. Members of staff know the pupils well and pupils say that the curriculum is interesting and lively with the challenge 'just about right – not too hard but making you think'. In most classes, pace is good throughout the lesson. In others, pace does vary, particularly when pupils are left to work independently and they finish work too quickly. Teachers plan well and ensure that they use a range of strategies to interest and motivate pupils. Where teaching is good, the teachers use good questioning techniques and maintain a good balance between enabling pupils to work alone or with partners. Resources are well used and there is a good level of discussion between pupils and with their teachers. Teachers mark pupils' work very well and encourage them to do better. They engage pupils into thinking for themselves and build on their problem solving skills so that most work independently and without fuss.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary; they work hard and want to do well in their studies. As a result, they enjoy coming

to school and attendance is above average. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils study different religions and cultures and have additional responsibilities around the school. These could be as part of the school council or as additional jobs and responsibilities. These include acting as 'compost kids', collecting and recycling rubbish, acting as buddies in the playground at the friendship stop or just generally being helpful and kind to others. Pupils know how to stay fit and healthy and regularly eat fresh fruit, take opportunities to walk whenever possible and take part in sporting events and after school clubs. They help to raise funds for charities and help in the local community. Approximately a quarter of the pupils, sing in the school choir and entertain the elderly at Christmas. These activities, plus their good skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, prepare them well for the future.

The curriculum is good and is of a high quality in English, French, religious education, music and art. There are excellent opportunities offered along with a wide array of extra-curricular activities after school. Pupils go on trips and have visitors to school and these enrich the curriculum. The residential trip in Years 5 and 6 has proved very popular with pupils. Care, guidance and support are outstanding; pupils feel safe and are very happy. The school council has been instrumental in making suggestions and members are pleased their views are considered. Pupils know where to go to ask for extra help and feel very well supported. The school has a comprehensive file on assessment data so that it can track every pupil's progress through the school. These systems are used well to set challenging targets and provide additional support where necessary.

Leadership and management are effective in analysing information well to gauge trends and ascertain whether pupils are making sufficient progress. The school's own evaluation is accurate and reflects the carefully analysed data on pupils' achievement. It assesses well what still needs to be done and successful strategies are put in place. This includes the deployment of teaching assistants to focus support to enable pupils to make better progress. The school uses its resources very well including teaching assistants. The school has very strong links with outside agencies, and governors are very knowledgeable about the school. They have a wide range of useful experience to offer the school and help in monitoring its progress. Through their committee structure, they monitor effectively the impact of strategic decisions such as the fifth class and its impact on the budget.

The good quality of the shared monitoring and evaluation and the support given to staff to improve their practice as well as the sharing of strategic roles and responsibilities are reasons why this school is so successful and popular with parents.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage is good and is well led by the coordinator. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage with the majority transferring from the on-site nursery and making good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. As a result, most children achieve the targets expected for their age by the time they join Year 1. The two classes which cater for both Reception and Year 1 pupils plan together to deliver a high quality curriculum and teaching which meet the needs of all pupils. Assessment is used well to gauge whether children will need additional support. Good links are maintained with the on-site nursery, which shares an outside area with the two Reception classes. These good links ensure that children transfer easily into the main school when they are five years old.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make sure teaching is consistently good enough to increase achievement in English, mathematics and science, especially for the average ability pupils.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Slinfold CofE Primary School, Horsham, RH13 0RR

I enjoyed meeting and talking to many of you during my one day visit to your school for the inspection. I was so pleased to see you all happy and working hard to achieve well in your lessons. It was also nice to see so many of you helping to look after your school through your various jobs and responsibilities such as 'compost kids' or helping to make sure everyone has a friend to play with. You take your responsibilities seriously through the school council and I was impressed with how well you care for the younger children in the school. I hope you will help them read this letter. Many of your parents have also told me about how the school helps to make you more confident and prepares you well for secondary school. I agree with them and think that you go to a good school.

You have shown how well you can do in English and mathematics, and many of you achieve high standards in your work. You told me how much you enjoy other subjects such as music, sport and French as well as going out on all the exciting trips locally and further away for the residential trip. The quality of your work in other subjects is good too and I enjoyed looking at your folders on Egyptians as well as your writing and mathematics books. I joined a few of you in the garden and you are rightly proud of your efforts here to grow vegetables and use recyclable materials to help you.

Your teachers work very hard to make sure your lessons are interesting, challenging and just right for you. They plan to do more of this and improve the teaching even more. I have agreed that this is where the school needs to continue to improve so that all teaching is good at all times. Your behaviour and attitudes to school life are excellent. I hope you will continue to work and play hard and behave as well as you can. In this way, as well as through your excellent suggestions for improvement, you will help your good school get even better.

I wish you all the best of luck for your future success.

Linda Kelsey HMI