

Aldingbourne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125816
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	328405
Inspection date	8 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	215
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Mundy
Headteacher	Liz Webster
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Westergate Street Westergate Chichester PO20 3QR
Telephone number	01243 542913
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and looked at the following specific aspects:

- how well older pupils now achieve in mathematics and science
- the processes in place for pupils to assess and guide their own learning
- how well the school promotes pupils' personal development
- how well senior managers promote improvement.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations and from looking at pupils' work and school documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, two governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were justified in nearly all areas, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Aldingbourne is an average sized school whose pupils are, apart from a very small minority, from mainly White British backgrounds. The number known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including statements, is lower than that seen in most schools. These pupils mainly have speech, language and behavioural difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in one Reception class. The school has a number of awards reflecting its commitment to promoting basic skills, creativity, healthy living and environmental awareness.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

- Aldingbourne is an outstanding school that has very successfully maintained its many strengths since the last inspection. A short tour of the school's stunning outside play, study, drama, scientific and environmental areas gives a taste of things to come. Pupils and parents alike are full of praise for their experiences of the school. What is it that they find so brilliant
- It is these excellent facilities and that pupils reach high academic standards within an atmosphere where staff and pupils alike never quite know what exciting activities may take place next. Many pupils voiced their appreciation, and comments such as 'It's a great place', 'It's all brilliant', and 'Everyone gets on with everyone else', were typical.

The headteacher and governing body provide excellent leadership and management. The headteacher, supported by senior staff, fosters high levels of teamwork, and it shows. The headteacher is very 'hands on', often teaching groups, dressing up to become a book character or helping with sports activities. This enthusiasm is infectious and as a result, the staff willingly take on innovative ideas and support each other so that pupils gain maximum benefit. This approach has resulted in staff being quick to spot weaknesses in last year's mathematics and science results and to remedy them in this year's tests, where results look to be much higher. The governors support the school in a low-key but superb way. They regularly help with activities such as golf tuition and enterprise days, while visiting the school regularly to keep their 'finger on the pulse' of progress. Their continued challenge has helped to ensure that the school meets its academic targets and corrects any weaker areas. The improvements to the school environment, the upgrading of other facilities and the willingness to support novel approaches reflect the school's desire and excellent capacity for further improvement. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the school's recent questionnaire support the school's values and approach. Only a very small minority voice pointers for improvement such as more homework or more notice of events. Typically, parents report that the school provides 'a fantastic learning atmosphere' and 'a great thrust for learning'.

It is the excellent quality of provision, from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6, that enables children to excel. Overall, the majority of teaching throughout the school is outstanding and tailored well to the different ages and interests of pupils. It ensures that pupils develop their individual potential and achieve brilliantly through the school. Pupils are articulate, confident to express their views and like getting 'stuck in' to a wide range of activities from modelling heads in the style of Picasso to learning new words for vegetables in a pretend French market stall. It does not stop there though, as pupils also learn how to rock climb, develop their team-building skills and go kayaking at the local activity centre – all in class time! These approaches generate a real 'buzz' in the school. This high quality of teaching, found in all classes, combined with an inventive curriculum, results in pupils being creative writers, avid readers and very confident mathematicians and scientists. They reach well above average standards by the time they leave Year 6. Pupils also reach above average standards in their information and communication technology work as they use the Internet, e-mail, word processing and spreadsheets effectively. Pupils also achieve really well in other subjects such as art, geography and history. The extensive range of sporting, musical, scientific and environmental facilities found in the school grounds really extend pupils' thinking, creativity and levels of expertise. Perhaps this was why one parent commented, 'The school is fantastic.' Playtimes promote physical activities for pupils brilliantly, in addition to class activities. The pupils are spoilt for choice as the wooden pirate ship, fort complete with drawbridge, 'percussion

garden', quiet areas, playground for activities such as badminton, basketball and simple running games all contribute to pupils' excellent levels of activity and collaborative play.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy the activities they do, as the curriculum is excellent. The 'rotation days' held weekly take the curriculum to new levels of excitement and broaden pupils' experiences really well. Planning for basic skills from Reception to Year 6 is not neglected and these are fostered systematically. The extra activities and after-school clubs help broaden children's experience, including a modern foreign language. Pupils talk about all the healthy exercise, including sports they like and using the on-site swimming pool. They know about healthy eating and many say they try to adopt healthy eating, happily eating their healthy snacks at playtimes.

Not surprisingly, nearly all aspects of children's personal development and well-being are outstanding, with the exception of some aspects of their knowledge and understanding of others from differing backgrounds. While pupils learn about 'different' people in activities such as their 'Books around the World' day, their knowledge of the diversity of beliefs and backgrounds of people found in the United Kingdom is not well developed. The pupils are directly involved in shaping the school's development and play a key role, often led by the work of the Millennium Committee Members (the school council). The excellent links developed within the local community, however, mean that the school promotes community cohesion well. Pupils also enjoy performing locally and putting on productions for parents and the local community. As the pupils' moral and social development is promoted to a high standard, their behaviour and attitudes are exemplary both in class and around the school.

Very close individual checks on pupils' progress mean that teachers know exactly what the next steps in learning are for all. Pupils have an excellent understanding of their targets, reflected in the positive comments from pupils who know how they can help them improve their work. This awareness of what to aim for next gives pupils very secure guidance about how to improve. Very good links with local secondary schools make sure that pupils make the change with as little fuss as possible. Children say they feel very safe and the school ensures they are with robust child protection procedures. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are cared for exceptionally well so that they make excellent progress. Professionals beyond the school support pupils very well in this respect to provide additional guidance when needed. Pupils speak highly of all staff and feel very well supported. Pupils report that they cannot recall the last time there was any bullying, but know that the school will respond quickly if it arises.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

This excellent provision ensures that children get off to a flying start and they make rapid progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, they reach above average standards. Before children start, the school develops close links with parents and feeder playgroups. Excellent links with their parents, aided by events such as the 'meet and mingle' evenings, help to make sure that children's emotional and welfare needs are catered for brilliantly. The extremely lively and motivating activities in the classroom and outside areas help them to develop their independence, while ensuring they start gaining the foundations of basic number, writing and reading skills. A pretend visit from a famous author really made a mark and the children's subsequent bear hunt was a great stimulus for their writing and drawing. Children enjoy choosing activities and there is a good balance of activities chosen by the teacher and those chosen by the children. The outside areas are brilliant and used effectively. A variety of large and small apparatus, a garden area, and role-play areas all aid their physical

and creative development. They enable children to be active and develop good levels of independence. The provision is expertly managed, not least in the way that all members of staff feel part of the team and make the children's learning really exciting.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultures, lifestyles and beliefs found in the United Kingdom.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

9 July 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Aldingbourne Primary School, Westergate, PO20 3QR

Thanks for making us feel really welcome and we enjoyed meeting you when we visited. Yours is an excellent school and we think you must be pleasantly exhausted at the end of the day. You are great ambassadors for your school by being so well behaved, helpful and polite.

Here are some of the things we found out.

- You make excellent progress in your work and you reach well above average standards by the time you leave.
- You said the teachers and helpers make sure that you feel very safe and really look after you. We think you are right.
- The children in the Reception class have a brilliant start to school.
- Links with local schools and the community are excellent.
- All of you work really hard, behave superbly well and get on with each other, particularly in your stunning playground, activity and quiet areas. I liked Midget Mansion – cool!
- You do brilliant work in art, music and in your sports activities too. Kayaking must be scary but fun.
- The teachers make lessons interesting and fun. The work some of you did on Picasso looks really well done.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work together very well to make your school a very welcoming, caring and happy place to be. The headteacher is enthusiastic and I did not recognise her when she got dressed up as Mrs Twit in Year 2's lesson and for your assembly!

We have asked the school to look at one thing to improve.

- Give you more opportunities to find out about different people's lifestyles backgrounds and customs that are found in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Keep working hard, make the most of all those activities you have and keep giving your ideas to the MCM committee to help the school improve.

Yours faithfully

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector