

Durrington First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125862
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340855
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
Reporting inspector	David Curtis

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

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	341
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gerald Harbinson
Headteacher	Alison Cornell
Date of previous school inspection	0 March 2007
School address	Salvington Road Worthing West Sussex BN13 2JD
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Age group	3–8
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision****Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventy per cent of the inspection looked at learning. Twenty lessons were observed and all teachers were observed teaching their own classes. Meetings were held with members of staff, pupils from Year 3 and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of meetings held by the governing body, the school improvement plan, local authority reports and documentation relating to safeguarding and pupils' welfare. Inspectors looked at the 156 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and those returned by staff and pupils in Year 3.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how successfully provision and leadership and management are reversing the downward trend in mathematics
- whether pupils of average and above average ability, especially girls, make sufficient progress
- the quality of pupils' moral, social and cultural development
- the quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage for problem solving, reasoning and numeracy.

Information about the school

This is a large nursery and first school. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in the Nursery and in three Reception classes. Children attend the Nursery for either the morning or afternoon session. In Years 1 to 3, pupils are taught in ability groups (sets) for mathematics. Most pupils are White British, with a minority from a range of other ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. In the current Year 2, it is well above the national average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils who are at the early stage of learning English as an additional language is below the national average.

The school is part of a 'soft collaboration' with Durrington Middle School. The headteacher leads and manages both schools. The Chair of the Governing Body is chair of both schools, although each school has its own governing body. There is a privately managed after-school club. On the school site, there is a privately managed Children's Centre.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The most striking feature is the outstanding quality of care, guidance and support. This, together with significant strengths in the school's partnership with parents and with outside agencies, contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result of strengths in the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the majority of children make good progress from the day they start school. Teaching of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is good, with strengths in challenging and extending the learning of all groups. Good progress continues into Years 1 to 3, with the result that pupils' achievement is good and their attainment is in line with that expected for pupils at the end of Year 3. There is no significant difference in the progress made by boys and girls. In mathematics, more able pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress because teachers' planning does not meet their needs fully and they do not have individual targets to help them with their next steps in learning.

In recent years, attainment in mathematics fell from above average to average. Inspection evidence indicates that the downward trend is halted because strengths in leadership and management are focused strongly on raising attainment in the subject. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and successful programmes put in place for those in danger of falling behind. However, there is insufficient focus on ensuring more able pupils are fully extended in their learning. Targets in the school improvement plan to raise attainment in mathematics, and in reading and writing, lack measurable outcomes. This means it is difficult for the school to demonstrate success in its key priorities. Within the senior leadership team, there is a sense of drive and determination in evaluating the school's performance. Its self-evaluation is accurate. Raising attainment is a priority as is the focus on developing pupils' personal and social skills. The school has the good capacity to improve further.

Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and have high expectations in relation to pupils' behaviour. As a result, behaviour is good, and often exemplary in lessons. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and of the importance of feeling safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They are polite, welcoming and engaging young people. Whilst they have a good understanding of their own locality, their understanding of the diversity of life in the United Kingdom and the wider world is underdeveloped. This is linked to the school and governing body not focusing sufficiently on the national and international elements of community cohesion.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- In mathematics, improve the progress of more able pupils from satisfactory to good by:
 - ensuring that teachers' planning takes into account the range of pupils' skills and abilities within each set
 - give pupils individual targets to help them understand their next steps in learning
- Improve pupils' understanding of the diversity of life in the United Kingdom and the wider world by implementing a clear action plan to show how the school will develop the national and international dimensions of community cohesion.
- Ensure that targets in the school improvement plan have measurable outcomes so that it can demonstrate how pupils' attainment is raised.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy school and work hard in their lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers and follow instructions carefully. For example in an information and communication technology lesson in Year 1, pupils entered data correctly into a table, including the correct use of capital letters for their favourite fairy tale characters. Pupils successfully work in collaboration with each other. In Year 3, pupils working together in pairs made good progress in making sentences more exciting and interesting. In group work, pupils show good skills in sharing, taking turns and in negotiating roles and responsibilities. In mathematics, there are occasional lapses of concentration, especially amongst more able pupils because work is too easy for them. Pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition make good progress because they are included fully in lessons and supported effectively by teachers, teaching assistants and their peers. Girls and boys show equal enthusiasm in answering questions. In one lesson in Year 3, all pupils were 'bursting' to tell their teacher how to spell the word 'chassis'.

Pupils feel exceptionally safe and secure in school and are totally confident to talk to teachers, lunchtime supervisors and the 'lollipop lady' if they have concerns or worries. Pupils take their roles and responsibilities, for example as library assistants and play leaders, seriously and perform their duties conscientiously. At the moment, the school does not have a school council but plans to replace it with what the school calls a 'pupil voice'. As a result, pupils currently do not have a sufficient say in how their school is run.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and teaching assistants work in effective partnership to make learning enjoyable for pupils and to help them make good progress. Teaching of key skills is strong, especially in literacy where the use of a commercial programme to teach letters and sounds impacts positively on pupils' progress in reading and writing including spelling. Teachers link subjects together successfully to make learning meaningful for pupils. In Year 1, the theme of 'Fairy Tales' is extended into mathematics and information and communication technology when pupils create graphs to show their favourite characters. In Year 3, there are equally effective links between literacy and art and design in the topic on 'The Iron Man'. In literacy, marking is good and teachers use this, together with individual pupil targets, to help pupils understand their next steps in learning. In mathematics, this is not as consistent, with the result that pupils are not as clear as to those next steps. Effective partnerships with the local high school contribute to pupils' enjoyment of, and participation in, a range of sporting events including an indoor athletics competition held at the high school.

Almost all parents and carers feel that the school keeps their children safe. The school is very effective in implementing all procedures for safeguarding of pupils and child protection. The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a significant strength. The school works exceptionally hard to engage parents and to work with a wide range of external agencies, including speech therapists and the educational psychologist to support pupils and their families. It successfully supports pupils from minority-ethnic families, including those at the early stages of English language acquisition which contributes to their good progress and enables them to play a full part

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in all aspects of school life.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and the very effective senior leadership team have a very clear vision for the school and are committed to school improvement. There are strengths in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, with the leadership team playing a significant and constructive role in this, which is a significant improvement from the time of the last inspection. The strong team in the school means that, despite a few parental reservations, there is no detrimental impact on the school as the result of the headteacher being, in addition, headteacher of the middle school. There is a sense of drive and determination to succeed amongst all staff that contributes significantly to the school's success. The leadership and management of pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities are especially strong.

The school complies fully with all statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils and child protection and implements them rigorously. The school promotes equality of opportunity successfully with all pupils fully engaged in all aspects of the school's day-to-day life. There is no evidence of any discrimination. Governors are supportive and challenging of the school's performance. They have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, the minutes of their meetings are not sufficiently clear on how they monitor the progress made by the school against the targets in its school improvement plan. Governors recognise that the national and international elements of community cohesion are underdeveloped.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with attainment that is well below expectations, especially in communication, language and literacy. Their achievement is good and they make good progress in the Nursery and in Reception, although attainment is below average by the time they start Year 1. Children enjoy school. They enjoy working on their own, for example in the Nursery when they use the interactive whiteboard for mark making. Children enjoy working in pairs, including sharing stories and using the computer. Role play is very popular and one group of six children took great delight in acting the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' and performing to an audience. The narrators were especially good in telling the story.

Teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistants work effectively as a team to support children's learning. There are significant strengths in the teaching of key skills in communication, language and literacy, and in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high quality support. The teaching of small groups is a strength, with pupils challenged and extended. For example, more able children were expected and encouraged to solve problems involving the addition of tens and units. Resources both indoors and outdoors are good, although unlike in the Nursery, Reception classes do not have an outdoor covered area which restricts aspects of outdoor learning, such as mark making.

Partnerships with parents are excellent and staff use outside agencies, including the Children's Centre, to support children and their families. Assessment of children's learning is good and the use of 'My Learning Journey' gives parents, children and staff a detailed and thorough picture of children's progress from Nursery until the end of Reception.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents are supportive of the school. From those who made positive written comments, strengths were mentioned in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as, 'I have been very impressed by how well the nursery staff have motivated my son; he cannot wait to go to the nursery every afternoon!' Parents are equally happy with the way the school promotes the children's all round development, for example, 'The school has an excellent balance between academic and pastoral spheres.' The inspection team found no evidence to support most of the concerns of a few parents. Inspecting findings confirmed that management of pupils' behaviour is good and that Durrington First School is not suffering because of the headteacher being head of the middle school. The inspection team did find that in mathematics more able pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. The inspectors found no evidence to substantiate any individual concerns, although these were summarised and reported to the school without identifying any individual.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Durrington First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 156 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 341 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	104	67	47	30	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	112	72	39	25	1	1	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	82	53	66	42	5	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	54	62	40	7	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	98	63	52	33	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	90	58	57	37	5	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	84	54	62	40	6	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	73	47	63	40	3	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	83	53	64	41	4	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	83	53	60	38	5	3	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	79	51	62	40	6	4	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	102	62	47	30	3	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	97	62	55	35	3	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Durrington First School, Worthing BN13 2JD

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave my colleagues and me when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting many of you and were impressed with how polite and friendly you are. I must thank those of you in Year 3 who met with the inspectors. I am delighted to tell you that you go to a good school. Here are some of the things that really impressed us:

- most of you make good progress in your learning, including children in the Nursery and Reception
- your behaviour is good and, in some lessons, it is excellent
- you enjoy your lessons and the help you receive from teachers and teaching assistants
- you feel very safe in school and know how important it is to keep fit and healthy
- all staff look after you exceptionally well, especially those of you who might find learning hard, and those of you who are learning how to speak English
- all staff work hard to help you learn successfully and to become polite young people who get on with each other and adults extremely well.

To make your school even better, I have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to:

- make sure that in numeracy lessons teachers give you work that challenges you and makes you think and give you targets to help you understand how you can improve your work
- help you understand more about what it is like to live in other parts of the United Kingdom and in the world
- make sure that when staff and governors set targets for themselves they can show that they have met them successfully.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis

Lead Inspector

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