



Carlton Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114381
LEA Brighton and Hove
Inspection number 279373
Inspection dates 6 December 2005 to 7 December 2005
Reporting inspector Steffi Penny HMIHMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Sussex Street
School category	Community		Brighton
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		East Sussex BN2 9HS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01273 604966
Number on roll	228	Fax number	01273 676 7889
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Tony Hadley
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr Philip Smith

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school in a disadvantaged area of Brighton. Many pupils are from single-parent or low earning families and a high proportion are entitled to free school meals. Nearly 40% of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. Almost 20% have a language other than English as their mother tongue and an average proportion are at an early stage of learning English. These numbers are above the national average. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. A larger than average number of pupils leave or join the school after Year 2.

The school provides extended services to the local community. It has recently been awarded a gold Activemark in recognition of its extended curriculum in physical education and a silver award as part of the Healthy Schools project. The school is involved in a number of initiatives to bring about school improvement and raise standards and has been awarded 'emerging status' by Quality in Study Support (QISS).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Carlton Hill Primary is a good school that is truly part of the local community. The care given to pupils and their families enables them to make the most of the many learning opportunities that the school provides. The school judged its effectiveness as satisfactory but it is better than that because of the extra attention given to ensuring that pupils make as much progress as possible.

Standards of work are now close to national expectations and for many pupils this represents good achievement. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are now good.

Teachers have very good professional relationships, creating a school that is warm, creative, caring and safe. There are excellent partnerships with parents and with those who offer support to pupils with additional needs. The curriculum gives pupils opportunities to learn through practical experience and they are developing an understanding of how they learn best. A range of exciting and well-attended school clubs add richness to the curriculum.

The school tracks the progress of individual pupils well but it needs to know exactly how well groups of pupils are doing. Similarly, there is a lack of clarity about what it is that the school is doing that is making the difference.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and it is well placed to continue this improvement. The school gives good value for money.

Grade: 2

Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the data that it has about individual pupils to evaluate the performance of different groups in order to help improve standards.
- Evaluate the effects of each of the new initiatives on the school's improvement.

Achievement and standards

Overall standards are satisfactory and achievement is good. In 2005, standards and achievement for pupils in Year 6 were satisfactory. However, progress was good for those who had been at the school since the age of five, those with learning difficulties or disabilities and those whose mother tongue was not English.

The standards of work reached by pupils in Year 2 and by those at the end of the Foundation Stage were below average in 2005 but this represented satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. The school has responded quickly to weaknesses identified through analysis of results, including strategies to develop

skills in writing and communication. All pupils who started school in September have made good progress in their first term.

Staff now have accurate information on what pupils achieve as they move from one year to the next and this will enable them to look more closely at the methods that are proving most successful. Currently there is a lack of information on the progress of particular groups. The targets set for improvement for individuals and year groups are realistic and should raise standards further.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Pupils are very proud of their school. They co-operate and behave well in lessons and enjoy their learning. In playground games, they are alert to others' needs. Pupils of all ages are polite and friendly to each other and to adults and feel that the school is a very caring community. Pupils are very aware of the importance of staying safe, adopting safe practices. They are very confident that the adults at the school will provide the help and guidance they need, both in lessons and in response to personal needs.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, in an assembly, pupils reflected on receiving presents and the importance of giving to others. They are very clear about right and wrong. Pupils develop self-confidence and an awareness of the disciplines needed in the workplace because of the many opportunities to take responsibility.

The school has been very successful in helping pupils to adopt a healthy life-style. Pupils love the different types of physical challenges the playground equipment offers. The breakfast club gives pupils a nutritious start to the day and the school meals are now prepared fresh on site. A pupil commented that, 'The pies are really good, Miss. I'm a vegetarian and they make them with Quorn and they are very tasty'.

By giving pupils a voice through the school council, the school is successful in preparing them to participate in their communities. Their attendance is around the national average and the school works very hard with its partners to improve this and pupils' punctuality still further.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good. It is characterised by activities that support varied learning styles, independent work that matches the needs of different levels of

ability and confident use of information and communication technology (ICT). Behaviour is managed firmly but fairly, using consistent approaches, and reward systems celebrate a range of achievements.

Support staff are so much part of the family of the school that they make a real difference to pupils who may be finding things difficult in the classroom. Bilingual assistants and staff from the Service for English as an Additional Language (SEAL) help teachers to make accurate assessments and devise programmes that enable these pupils to develop confidence in what they are learning. The support that all pupils receive in class helps them to become more independent.

Pupils respond well to opportunities to think about what they have learned, how they have learned and the extent which they have reached their targets. The recent focus on improving the surroundings to support different ways of learning, for example the use of diffused lighting, darker areas, and sofas, is making a difference to pupils' concentration, attention and achievement.

Teaching is monitored by subject leaders and senior managers who provide constructive feedback, focused on how well pupils achieve.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for pupils to learn in a variety of practical ways, supporting their strengths and preferred ways of working. Visits, trips, use of local amenities and expert visitors, including parents, add quality to the curriculum.

Creative aspects such as drama, music and art add excitement and interest to all subjects, making a positive difference to the knowledge and understanding that pupils gain and to their enjoyment of learning. Pupils are rightly proud of the high quality art and design work on display around the school. They are involved in projects that combine their learning and social skills. For example, the playground, designed in conjunction with the school council, is carefully zoned with a wide range of different activities and equipment.

Learning targets for literacy and numeracy are a focus in all areas of the curriculum. Cultural aspects are well supported and resourced. The curriculum is enriched by study support activities before and after school, as well as at lunchtime. The 'Grub Club' and the mentoring programme are particularly popular. Activities maintain the focus on raising standards, linking with lessons whenever possible. The school is involved in a range of local and national initiatives, making good use of ideas, resources and funding.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

The school makes excellent use of its extended provision to promote school improvement and to safeguard its pupils. For example, the breakfast club has helped to improve attendance for some pupils and has helped others who find it difficult to leave their parents at the start of the day. Child protection and health and safety procedures are effectively in place.

The school makes its expectations of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and effort very clear and creates a community spirit in which all pupils are enabled to flourish. This means that new pupils and those with particular needs are cared for very well.

Learning mentors, the school counsellor and nurture groups are used extremely effectively to help pupils and families at times of crisis. The referral process for the family support group and the very close links with other agencies provide families with easy access to external services. Parents appreciate this very much as it puts their children in a position to be able to learn.

The introduction of 'Playground Buddies' and the training of staff and pupils make the playground a safe place to be. The Lunchtime Club provides a secure haven for those children that need to be in a quieter and more structured place in the middle of the day.

Staff know the individual needs of pupils very well and individual progress in learning is very carefully tracked.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The vast majority of parents are very supportive and proud of the school. One parent commented, 'It is a great little school, principally because it is run by an enthusiastic team led by a dynamic, inspiring and aware headteacher'. Pupils agree with their parents. They like the way staff listen to them and make them feel special. One pupil said, 'I like the positive attitude of teachers and my mum thinks it's special here too'.

Through careful leadership and management at all levels, staff have created an environment that is truly multicultural, vibrant and warm. This community spirit makes the school the hub of the neighbourhood. Leaders systematically seek information about how well things are going and are willing to change and revise their ideas to find what works most effectively. The school self-evaluation is accurate and it takes into account the views of parents and pupils and acts upon them well.

The governors discharge their responsibilities with exceptional diligence and care.

An example of this is the attention that was given to attracting and acquiring high quality candidates for the key appointments that have been made. They act as a good 'critical friend' to the headteacher.

Leadership and management contribute very well to the school's capacity to improve. This can be seen in the progress made since the last inspection, in the quality of the school's improvement plans and in its involvement in a wide range of government and local initiatives. These initiatives now need to be evaluated so that the school has a clear understanding of the impact they have made on school improvement.

Grade: 2

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The School Council Carlton Hill Primary School Sussex Street Brighton East Sussex BN2 9HS

8 December 2005

Dear Pupils

As you know, your school was inspected on 6 and 7 December 2005. Some of you met the inspectors and many of you will have seen us around the school. Thank you for telling us what you thought about your school. This helped us to decide how well you are doing. This letter is to let you know what your school does well and how you can help your school to be even better.

Some of your parents or carers responded to a confidential questionnaire and we also took their views and concerns into account.

Carlton Hill Primary is a good school. We can see that you are very happy in school and that you are proud of the good work that is in your books and on the walls. You really like using the playground equipment and enjoy playtimes and school clubs. You are friendly and take good care of one another.

The staff give you lots of help in the classroom but they still make sure that you do things by yourself as often as possible. They help you to learn new things in exciting ways and involve lots of other people so that you are getting the best help.

We have asked Mr Smith to work with the staff to look more closely at how fast you are learning and at the special projects that the school is involved in to see which ones are helping you to learn best.

Thank you again for helping us to have such a great visit to your school.

Wishing you a happy and successful future,

Steffi Penny HMI (Lead inspector)