

Patcham Junior School

Ladies Mile Road, Patcham, Brighton, BN1 8TA

Inspection dates 7–8 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders and governors have successfully tackled the issues identified at the time of the last inspection. They have securely established significant improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The quality of teaching is now good. This ensures that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and achieve well across the school.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is much higher than the national average. Standards increased substantially in 2014.
- Above average proportions of pupils attained the highest levels in reading and mathematics in 2014.
- Pupils make very rapid progress in some classes because teaching is consistently strong.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In 2014, the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally narrowed.
- Teachers use marking very effectively. Pupils understand how well they are learning and what they can do to improve because they are involved in the process.
- Pupils work hard and behave well. Leaders and governors make sure that they are safe and secure.
- Leaders keep rigorous checks on pupils' progress. They use this information effectively to measure how well developments support pupils' achievement.
- The governing body works effectively with leaders. Governors have a good understanding of the school's work and hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement.
- Parents and carers are happy about the school and feel that their children are learning well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers do not always set sufficiently demanding activities to ensure pupils, particularly the most able, make as much progress as they should in writing. Therefore, achievement in writing is not as good as in reading and mathematics.
- Not all teachers use checks on pupils' learning quickly enough to adjust the work set during lessons.
- In a few classes, teachers do not always have the highest expectations of pupils' work. When this is the case, some pupils take less care and their work is untidy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 20 lessons or part lessons, including three observed jointly with the headteacher and four observed with the deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, parents, carers and pupils. Discussions were also held with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 55 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, they spoke with individual parents and carers informally at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of 11 staff questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and considered a range of policies and documents. These included the school’s improvement plan, information about pupils’ progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils’ work provided by the school, as well as in lessons. They also listened to pupils read during lessons.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Elson

Additional Inspector

Judith Grevett

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is much lower than the national average. Pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a breakfast club which is managed and run by the school and was visited during this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential, particularly in writing, by ensuring that teachers:
 - always set work which is sufficiently demanding, particularly for the most able
 - check pupils' progress during lessons and adjust the work set to provide prompt support and challenge
 - always expect pupils to present their work neatly and tidily.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is a busy, purposeful and positive place to work and learn. It has a strong learning culture and there is a clear desire to succeed among staff and pupils alike. Parents and carers are confident about the school's work, pupils behave well and staff morale is good.
- The headteacher has brought about significant improvements in teaching to ensure that pupils achieve well. He and the governors have dealt systematically with weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. The pace of change has accelerated considerably during the past year.
- The role played by leaders at different levels has developed well. Leaders have made a number of astute and successful appointments to the leadership team, including that of the deputy headteacher. This has strengthened the school's capacity to sustain and build on developments.
- Subject leaders are clear about their role and are more accountable for pupils' achievement. They regularly complete a range of activities which ensure they have a good understanding of teaching and the difference this is making to pupils' achievement. They are involved in identifying development needs and in checking the success of initiatives.
- A consistent focus on raising teachers' expectations has brought significant improvements to the quality of teaching and to pupils' progress. Most teachers have high expectations of all pupils. However, leaders recognise that there is still more to be done to ensure that the same high standards are in place in all classes.
- Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching using a range of evidence. For example, they check pupils' progress frequently to make sure that improvements in teaching are working and raising pupils' achievement. Staff are clear about the link between salary progression and pupils' progress. Leaders provide effective support and training for staff. For instance, teachers have benefited from opportunities to watch and learn from the best practice, both within the school and further afield.
- The school works more closely with the local infant school than previously. Teachers meet prior to pupils moving from Year 2 to Year 3. This means that they have a better understanding of pupils' needs and are able to plan learning more effectively as soon as pupils join the school.
- The school has an accurate view of its work. Leaders ensure that plans for development are carefully considered and accurately identify aspects of the school's work in need of further improvement. They rigorously review how successful these have been in raising pupils' achievement and make changes where needed.
- The school has effectively reviewed the way subjects are taught to ensure pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff have worked together to decide on the priorities for pupils' learning in relation to local, national and international contexts. For example, they learn about the history of Brighton as well as both world wars. Pupils also have opportunities to study subjects which contribute well to their personal and social development, such as riding a bicycle safely and cookery. These experiences help them to develop important skills needed for life in modern Britain.
- Topic books on the First World War clearly indicate how learning excites pupils' interest. Some include photographs and stories about family members who played a part in Britain's history. Topics such as these help contribute very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and help them to appreciate British values, such as tolerance and democracy.
- Subject leaders are more focused on their responsibility for pupils' learning than they were at the time of the last inspection. They know exactly how well pupils are achieving and use this information to plan appropriately for developments.
- The local authority provides good support and knows the school well. For instance, a representative reviewed the quality of teaching in the school with the headteacher immediately after the last inspection. This ensured that leaders lost no time in getting to grips with aspects of teaching in need of rapid improvement.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used well to support pupils' health and participation in sport. Pupils benefit from a wide range of sports clubs, such as football, cricket and gymnastics, including some with specialist coaching. As a result, they are far healthier and are better equipped to take part in competitive sports. Training for teachers has improved the quality of physical education teaching and this has improved pupils' achievement.
- Leaders make good use of additional pupil premium funding. Pupils benefit from small-group teaching and individual support. Pupils involved in a programme to boost their basic reading skills have made rapid progress and read more confidently as a result. The deputy headteacher oversees the use of additional funds carefully and works with colleagues to check how successfully pupils are learning.

■ Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are given an appropriately high priority. The school's safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet statutory requirements. The school is committed to equal opportunities for all its pupils. Incidents of discrimination are extremely rare.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body provides enthusiastic, effective and loyal support for the school and the local community. One governor commented that the governing body is 'as strong and resilient as it's ever been'. Governors are confident that the headteacher and his staff are doing a good job and can see the improvements for themselves.
- Following the last inspection, the governing body worked closely with the local authority to review and restructure its work. The introduction of job descriptions for individual governors ensures that they are clear about their roles and the part they play in the school's development. Regular discussions ensure that they have a good understanding of how well pupils achieve in relation to other schools nationally. Governing body minutes reflect the robust debates that take place during meetings, including challenging questions for leaders about pupils' learning and progress. The governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding is highly effective in ensuring that all safeguarding requirements are met in full.
- Governors have higher expectations of the school than at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher provides thorough and good quality information about the quality of teaching and learning so that governors are well informed. However, governors also make sure that they check out the school's work for themselves. They have visited lessons and discussed what they have seen with a local authority representative. This ensures that they have a first-hand view of teaching and learning. They know how procedures are used to check and support staff performance and salary progression and what is being done to tackle any underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and considerate. They routinely open doors for adults when moving around the school and welcome visitors with smiles. Pupils settle quickly at the start of lessons and wait quietly for their turn to go into the assembly hall.
- Pupils are positive about school and keen to please their teachers. However, occasionally during lessons some pupils find it hard to concentrate on their work and they become distracted. This restricts their learning and slows their progress.
- The quality of pupils' work has improved substantially since the last inspection. Most take great care with their work so that it is neat and tidy. However, in some instances pupils take less care and as a result, their work is scruffy. This is particularly the case where teachers do not always insist on the highest standards of presentation.
- Pupils behave well during break times. They like to play with the sports equipment in the playground during lunch break and are active and busy.
- The breakfast club is well organised and provides a safe and friendly start to the school day for those who attend.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are confident about their place in the school community because adults value their opinions.
- There are effective procedures in place to check and support pupils' attendance. Leaders make sure that pupils, parents and carers understand the importance of attending regularly. They are alert to any patterns in absenteeism and work well with parents and carers and agencies. Attendance is consistently above average.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying and the harmful effects this has on people's lives. They say that bullying incidents hardly ever happen and that there is never any racism. Records support their view.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe because events and lessons ensure that pupils are alert to some everyday risks. For example, they learn about road safety and how to use bicycles and scooters safely in the locality.
- Pupils understand that they need to take care when using the internet and mobile phones. Teachers make sure that they know what to do if anything worries them when using computers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved substantially since the last inspection and is now consistently good. As a result, pupils make faster progress.
- Mathematics is taught well in all year groups. Teachers make sure that pupils of all abilities use practical equipment whenever helpful to strengthen their understanding of mathematical concepts. They encourage pupils to 'have a go' at solving mathematical problems to develop their confidence.
- The introduction of 'Drop Everything and Read' sessions in all year groups gives pupils more opportunities to read for enjoyment, develop personal preferences for different types of books and authors, and hone their reading skills.
- Pupils have more opportunities to write in different subjects than at the time of the last inspection. This means that they practise writing skills more frequently during the school week. They are taught how to edit their work so that they have a clearer understanding of how to improve their writing.
- Teachers in Year 3 make good use of information received from the local infant school, as well as their own assessments, to plan for pupils' needs. Positive relationships mean that pupils establish themselves quickly when they arrive and make good progress.
- Some teaching in the school is very strong. Where this is the case, teachers have the highest expectations of all pupils and know precisely how to move pupils' learning on to the next level. They frequently check pupils' understanding during lessons and adjust teaching to make sure that they make the best possible progress. For example, teachers in Year 3 move pupils between groupings and activities during lessons according to their understanding of the subject being studied at the time.
- In a few classes, however, pupils spend too long working on the same task, despite clear signs that some have securely grasped the concept and are ready to move onto the next level. On these occasions their progress slows.
- All teachers follow the school's marking policy. They give pupils good quality feedback about their work and involve them in reviewing their own learning. As a result, pupils have a growing sense of their own success and understand how they can improve. However, while improved marking is having a positive impact on pupils' progress, some teachers' expectations of pupils' work are not always high enough. This means that sometimes pupils' work is untidy or unfinished.
- Teaching assistants work flexibly with different groups of pupils, including the most able and those who find learning more difficult. Good communication between teaching assistants and class teachers ensures that they are knowledgeable about pupils' needs.
- Teachers meet as year groups to plan and review teaching and learning. This has ensured greater consistency and enables teachers to share expertise. Most teachers plan work which is sufficiently demanding for the most-able pupils. During the inspection a group of the most-able mathematicians in Year 6 made excellent progress because the work set challenged them to think hard and deepened their understanding. However, in some classes this is not always the case and the most-able pupils do not always make the progress they should.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points. Results in the national tests are consistently much higher than the national average and increased substantially in 2014. Pupils' progress is more even across the school than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' needs are identified earlier and extra help provided in the younger year groups. Pupils feel they are making good progress and most parents and carers agree.
- Pupils speak with confidence. They are able to express their opinions and reflect on their experiences very well. Pupils in Year 6 give mature reasons for what they think. They make sensible and thoughtful choices about their work and have a well-developed sense of their personal responsibility for learning. Pupils have a positive and investigative approach to learning and are well placed for the next stage of their education.
- The most-able pupils make faster progress across the school than they did at the last inspection. In 2014, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels increased substantially. The proportion attaining the highest Level 6 was much higher than the national average.
- Pupils make slightly slower progress in writing than in reading and mathematics and this has been a focus for school development since the last inspection. Attainment in writing has been lower than in other subjects for several years, albeit still above average, with a small increase in 2014. Pupils' work and checks on their progress indicate that they are making faster progress as improvements in the teaching of writing take effect. Work in books and inspection evidence show that the school is on course to secure further improvements in attainment this year. Pupils have a firm grasp of basic literacy skills by the end of

Year 6 and complete written tasks briskly and successfully.

- A dip in mathematics attainment to average levels in 2013 was reversed the following year, when standards returned to levels much higher than the national average. Pupils present their work clearly and confidently use a wide range of techniques to tackle mathematical problems. They relish tasks which make them think hard, particularly the most able. Pupils in Year 6 told inspectors that they find the work challenging but that they know what to do if they get stuck. Pupils know how mathematics is a key feature of everyday life.
- Pupils like to read. They talk about books with interest and appreciate visits to the school and local libraries. Pupils' attainment in reading has been above average for some years, with further increases in the past two years.
- Pupils who are eligible for additional pupil premium funding achieve well. In 2014, their attainment was about four months behind that of other pupils nationally in mathematics, about eight months behind in reading and six months behind in writing. These gaps narrowed in 2014 compared with the previous year. When compared with other pupils in the school, the attainment of this group of pupils was about eight months in mathematics, about a year behind in reading and about six months behind in writing. Pupils currently in the school make the same good progress as their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is on track to close the remaining gaps this year.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They enjoy learning because they are well supported, both in lessons and in small groups. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good quality support and relationships are very good.

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	114372
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	462654

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Danny Simpson
Headteacher	Ashley Seymour-Williams
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 May 2015
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