



# Middle Street Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

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**Unique Reference Number** 114369  
**Local Authority** Brighton and Hove  
**Inspection number** 289888  
**Inspection dates** 19–20 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Eileen Chadwick

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 address</b>	Middle Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Brighton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		BN1 1AL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 323184
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	247	<b>Fax number</b>	01273 724769
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	John Warmington
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Aldous
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 November 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	19–20 September 2006	289888

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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This above average-sized primary school with a nursery serves Brighton town centre and surrounding area. All children who enter in Reception have had some pre-school education and a half have attended the school's own Nursery. Pupils' overall attainment on entry is average although this covers the full range of ability. The school serves a mixed area and the proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average; most have moderate learning difficulties. A significant number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties join the school other than at the usual times. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post for a year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Middle Street school is a good school. It provides a well-rounded education where pupils thrive. Pupils' achievement is good. They achieve well in academic subjects and have outstanding opportunities to develop their talents in sport and the creative arts. Inspectors agree with the school that it is still improving but find the school too modest when judging its current effectiveness as satisfactory. Strong leadership has raised standards this year, especially for Year 6 pupils, after a drop in recent years.

Much good teaching is leading to pupils achieving well. Standards in English and mathematics are now above average in Years 2 and Year 6. Pupils make excellent progress in information and communication technology (ICT). Children in Reception achieve the standards expected of this age. They make good progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in Reception. Pupils' progress in writing is not as steady as in reading from Reception to Year 2. By Year 2, spelling and punctuation are weaker aspects of writing. In Reception, there is sometimes too much repetition of earlier learning, especially in phonics and writing. The teaching of writing is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 although the build up of skills is not always systematic. The school knows that checks on children's progress in Nursery and Reception are not as good as in the rest of the school. The school's new systems for checking progress have been particularly successful in raising standards and achievement in Years 1 to 6.

The school meets the needs of its diverse community well and parents think highly of it. Comments such as, 'All children are valued and given support, and as a result they leave Middle Street as confident young people with a maturity beyond their years', indicate the impact of the outstanding way in which the school promotes all pupils' well-being, regardless of their starting points. Pupils are well cared for and kept very safe. They really enjoy school and learning. Their behaviour and attitudes are all good. The good curriculum is enlivened through outside visits and activities provided outside normal school hours. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep fit and healthy.

The school's good care, guidance and support provide an important foundation for all that the school does and contribute to pupils' good personal development. However, attendance is not as good as it should be because too many parents take their children out of school during term-time for holidays. The school recognises that better systems are needed for improving attendance.

Senior staff are leading the school very well. They are building on strengths and are making significant headway in improving achievement through improving the consistency of good teaching. The progress made this year shows the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Enhance the checking of children's progress in Nursery and Reception so that learning always builds on what children know, especially in writing.
- Improve pupils' progress in spelling and punctuation from Reception to Year 2.

- Promote better attendance through working together with parents to reduce the holidays taken during term-time.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils enter the school with the skills and knowledge expected and leave in Year 6 having reached above average standards in English and mathematics, with particularly impressive performance in English and ICT. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties are supported well and make good progress.

Until 2005, test results in Key Stage 2 had been falling. Firm action by the school's leadership team reversed that trend and in 2006 standards improved markedly. Pupils presently in Years 5 and 6 are also reaching above average standards, indicating that pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2.

Whilst progress overall in Key Stage 1 is good, progress in writing in Years 1 and 2 is only satisfactory. This is because spelling and punctuation are not as rigorously taught as other aspects of English. Standards for seven-year-olds have risen in the last two years and are now above average in reading and mathematics, although average in writing.

Children's progress in Nursery is good. However, this pace of learning does not continue into Reception and progress here is satisfactory. In particular, there is not always enough challenge for more capable children and early writing skills are not taught rigorously enough. As a result, although children achieve the standards expected by the end of Reception, including in literacy and numeracy, writing standards are not as good as reading, especially for more capable children.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Middle Street is a safe and orderly community where pupils behave well. It is immediately obvious that they feel at home. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school because the school provides many stimulating experiences. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils make a good contribution to the community, for example through raising money for charities, the school council and the eco-warriors scheme. Pupils have positive attitudes to other cultures because of the many practical opportunities they have to experience these and their own cultures. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties settle extremely well. Their behaviour and achievement are good because of the excellent support they are given. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. The outstanding opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide variety of sports and for developing understanding of healthy lifestyles promote pupils' well-being very well. This was reflected in the school's recent Healthy School silver award. Pupils' economic awareness is good. They develop good teamwork,

problem solving and decision making skills. However, their understanding of the world of work is not as developed.

Attendance is somewhat below the national average. The number of days lost due to family holidays during term-time is an important factor and the school recognises that, working in partnership with parents, more could be done to improve this.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers give pupils interesting activities and make particularly good use of interactive whiteboards to bring learning alive so pupils enjoy lessons and learn well. They expect good behaviour and hard work from pupils, who respond willingly. Consistently strong teaching in Years 4 to 6 is raising achievement in both English and mathematics. In these years, teachers have strong subject knowledge and are particularly skilled in matching work to pupils' needs throughout lessons so that progress is faster. Regular specialist teaching in sport, ICT and music also promotes high quality learning.

Within this favourable picture, in Reception and Key Stage 1, there are occasional shortcomings when pupils are given work that is too easy or hard or there is not enough direct teaching of literacy skills. Teaching in the Nursery is good but it is only satisfactory in Reception. Different assessment systems are used in Nursery and Reception, which can prevent teaching, especially in Reception, building on what children already know, especially for more capable children. The school is fully aware of this.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. A key feature is the way the school makes full use of its city centre location, both through visits and visitors, to bring the curriculum alive and stimulate pupils' interest. Pupils have strong opportunities in art, music and the humanities as well as good provision in English, mathematics and science. Excellent specialist provision in ICT gives pupils a very good introduction to the subject. Sport is a real strength of the school, despite the limitations of its site. Outstanding provision is achieved through the highly effective links with the local sports college and sports clubs, which lead to pupils' excellent progress in physical education.

The school recognises that some further development is needed to ensure more thorough coverage of phonics and spelling in Reception in order to provide a more secure base for pupils to develop their writing skills later on.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Parents particularly value 'the warm, friendly and caring environment'. The school puts much emphasis on ensuring that pupils are happy and made to feel safe and secure. Pupils with learning difficulties do particularly well because they are given strong social and emotional support, through, for example, the school's learning mentors. A new system is being introduced this term with the aim of improving academic target-setting. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were well aware of their targets from last term and knew from these, and the marking of their work, what they needed to focus on in order to improve. School leaders know that they have not been as rigorous as they could be to discourage parents from taking children out of school for holidays in term-time.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher is leading the school very well. The leadership team and all staff share a very clear vision for the future of the school and have secured a very positive working environment. There is excellent teamwork amongst all staff in their quest to do their very best for the pupils. Parents are very involved in their children's learning and think highly of the school. This year the leadership team has firmly established its self-evaluation procedures, including the rigorous monitoring of teaching. There is now effective analysis and tracking of pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 6 and this has enabled the school to accurately identify priorities. Subsequent actions have led to much improved standards in English, mathematics and science. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and play a full part in monitoring and self-evaluation. The management of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is particularly effective and has resulted in nearly all pupils reaching at least average standards in English by Year 6.

Nevertheless, the school is fully aware that the systems for checking children's progress in Nursery and Reception are a factor in the uneven progress from Nursery to Reception. Governors are supportive but, as there are several new governors this year, their roles in challenging the school are still developing. Given the rate of recent improvement the school has a good capacity to improve.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<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.

## 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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	3
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**

As you know we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed seeing you at work and play and talking with some of you. The school gives you a good education and is working hard to make itself even better.

These are some of the good things about your school:

- You really enjoy your school and the many after school activities.
- You behave well and really understand the importance of keeping fit.
- You do well in English, mathematics and ICT.
- Teachers make sure you have excellent opportunities to take part in sports.
- Your teachers take good care of you and make lessons interesting.

A few things could be better and here are the ways we are asking the school to improve:

- Check how well those of you in Reception learn so work is not too easy, especially in writing.
- Improve spelling and punctuation for those of you in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Work with your parents to make sure attendance is better and that you do not take holidays in term-time.

You can help improve your school as well by trying to improve your spelling and punctuation and reminding your parents about not taking holidays in term-time.

Thank you again for your help.