

Sandown Primary School

The Ridge, Hastings, TN34 2AA

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress as they move through the school. As a result, although improving, attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 is below average.
- Subject leaders are not fully effective in helping to ensure that teaching and pupils' achievement are consistently good.
- While improving, teaching has not been effective enough over time to promote good progress for all groups of pupils. This is because teachers do not always have consistently high expectations of pupils.
- As a result, teachers do not always give pupils work that is hard enough for them.

The school has the following strengths

- The high expectations of the headteacher, other leaders and governors have led to sustainable and continuing improvements to teaching and a school with greater ambition for its pupils. As a result, pupils are now making faster progress than in previous years.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are proud of their work and their school. They are courteous and polite, and behave well towards one another.
- Pupils are kept safe, and feel cared for and valued by the school.
- Strong teaching and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that children make rapid progress and are very well prepared for Year 1.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in every class. They observed one assembly, 15 lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. Nine lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, four members of the governing body, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including support for pupils who need extra help. They heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's use of sports premium and pupil premium funding, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, the governing body minutes, records of how pupils' learning is checked and tracked, and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through taking note of the 48 responses to the online Parent View survey, two letters that were submitted, and through discussions with several parents and carers.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 44 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bill James

Additional Inspector

Janet Sharp

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is much higher than the national average. This extra money is provided for children known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care, or with a parent in the armed services. There is one pupil with a parent in the armed forces and no pupils in local authority care currently on roll.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is above average. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, while others have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or other needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is slightly higher than in most other schools.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have two Reception classes provided for them.
- The mathematics leader took up her leadership responsibilities in January 2014. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader took up her leadership responsibilities in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to accelerate progress and raise standards to at least average levels, ensure that all teaching is at least good by:
 - making sure that teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - planning work that challenges all groups of pupils and builds on what they already know and can do
 - ensuring that teachers' questioning helps to extend pupils' learning
 - making consistent use of marking and verbal feedback to help pupils to make faster progress.
- Ensure that subject leaders' work to support other staff helps them to accelerate pupils' progress through more effective teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they do not make consistently good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Too few of the more-able pupils reach the higher levels of attainment.
- However, progress is accelerating as a result of better teaching, so that pupils are on track to reach higher standards in these subjects than in the previous year.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They make rapid progress and leave the Reception Year well prepared for Year 1.
- The school's results in the national screening checks of phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) were lower than in most other schools in previous years. However, improvements to the teaching of phonics have helped pupils to develop these basic skills more quickly and securely.
- Pupils' progress has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils currently in the school, including the most able and those joining the school other than at the usual times, now often make good progress. However, this was not the case in the past, and there are still a few areas in the school where pupils' progress is too slow. This is because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low.
- The school is successfully narrowing the gap between pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and other pupils. Eligible pupils are currently about one-and-a-half to two terms behind other pupils in English but have closed the gap in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a much narrower gap overall than in previous years.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points across much of the school. This is because teachers identify their learning needs accurately and respond to them effectively.

A very large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion think that their children make good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement as it has not ensured that all groups of pupils make consistently good progress in order to achieve well over time.
- However, teaching is improving and the proportion of good teaching has increased, including in English and mathematics lessons. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated from the school.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are rising but are still sometimes not high enough. As a result, the activities planned in lessons do not always offer pupils enough challenge.
- Teachers' questioning is improving, though this is still variable as it does not consistently deepen pupils' learning or challenge their thinking.
- Teachers and pupils have good working relationships with each other. Teachers successfully engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- The teaching of phonics is more effective than in previous years because the work pupils are given is better planned to meet their different learning needs and to build effectively on previous learning.
- Teaching assistants are used more effectively than at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers deploy them well to support pupils where support is most needed. The training that teaching assistants have received has improved the quality of support that they provide to pupils. This is helping to accelerate pupils' learning, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

- Pupils' learning is supported through teachers' feedback during lessons and through marking in books, which provide pupils with advice about how to improve their work. However, the quality and impact of feedback is inconsistent because some teachers expect less of their pupils than others.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Children learn swiftly in welcoming and attractive classrooms. Teaching is purposeful and effective, and ensures that children use their time well and develop key skills.
- A very large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion consider that their children are taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are proud of their work and their school. Pupils' positive attitudes towards learning have contributed to the good progress made by many pupils this year.
- However, behaviour records indicate that this has not been the case consistently over time. When teaching is weaker, pupils occasionally go off task and do not concentrate well enough on their learning. Pupils are courteous and polite towards one another and to adults. Their conduct in the school is good, including during lunchtime, in the library and in the playground. They respect and take care of the school's equipment, classrooms and outdoor areas.
- Behaviour in the school has improved over time. This is because of the headteacher's high expectations and the introduction of an effective system of rewards and sanctions. The school's regular 'Funky Friday' assemblies promote pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
- The school does not tolerate any mistreatment of pupils by one another and teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe from bullying. Pupils who talked to the inspectors had faith that staff would deal effectively with any poor behaviour that might arise.
- School records show that there have been few incidents of poor behaviour over time and that bullying has been very rare. The few incidents that have occurred have been dealt with effectively by the school. It is clear that the school will not tolerate poor behaviour or any discrimination, and that it works actively to promote equal opportunities and a culture of respect for others.
- Attendance has risen very swiftly from low to higher than average. The attendance of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding has also improved. These improvements have resulted from the school's strong promotion of regular attendance, such as through the use of an 'attendance tree' and successful work with parents, carers and the local community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet. Pupils who talked to the inspectors said that they were well looked after and felt safe in the school.
- A very large majority of parents and carers who expressed an opinion think that behaviour in the school is well managed, and that their children feel safe and are happy at school.

The leadership and management require improvement

- While the headteacher and leadership team are definitely improving the school, the actions they have taken have not yet ensured that pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are consistently good. Standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 remain below average, and there is still too much teaching that is less than good.
- Subject leaders are preparing the school well for the implementation of the new National

Curriculum. They have been active in training and developing other staff, including teaching assistants. While this work has contributed to improved teaching in their subjects, it has not yet ensured that pupils' learning is consistently good across the school.

- The school's self-evaluation accurately identifies recent improvements and where the school needs to improve further. The school's plan for bringing about improvements is sensible and ambitious. It identifies clear actions designed to bring about improvements to teaching and to pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher has strengthened performance management arrangements so that they now reflect his consistently high expectations of staff. All teachers are expected to ensure that they teach well and that their pupils make good progress. As a result, the school has greater ambition for its pupils, and pupils have begun to make faster progress than in previous years.
- The headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team and governors, has taken decisive action to ensure that there is currently no inadequate teaching in the school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is highly effective. She has strengthened the links between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 and has ensured that children in Reception make rapid progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively through the range of subjects that it teaches. It helps pupils to develop a love and understanding of art, music, science and literature through, for example, work about the artists Paul Cezanne and William Turner, explorations of rocks and soil, and the use of the attractively presented library.
- Sports premium funding is spent effectively, particularly on developing teachers' skills and expertise in this area. Funding is also spent well on enhancing pupils' engagement in sports through the provision of a range of sports clubs, athletics activities and opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on effective extra support in English and mathematics for eligible pupils, and on helping families to value and promote their children's education. These measures have resulted in improvements to the progress and attendance of eligible pupils.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements.
- The local authority has strongly supported the school over time and underpinned the headteacher's efforts to raise aspirations for the school. The local authority has given effective training to staff and governors.
- A large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion consider the school to be well led.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors offer school leaders a strong level of challenge and are clear about where the school needs to improve. They monitor the quality of teaching in a well-organised fashion and ensure that performance management arrangements reflect their and the headteacher's high expectations. Governors have supported the headteacher's strong actions to eradicate inadequate teaching. They have checked that any promotions or pay awards are only given to teachers if their pupils make sufficient progress. Governors understand data about pupils' attainment and progress, and use this understanding to question leaders about areas where these are too low. They have been instrumental in improving the school and raising its ambitions for its pupils.

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	114447
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	431011

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Sterrick
Headteacher	Charles Lindsay
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 May 2012
Telephone number	01424 436983
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