

# Sandown School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	118573
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	379640
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Wendy Simmons

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	318
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joy Spencer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mathew Reynolds (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7–8 July 2009
<b>School address</b>	Golf Road Deal Kent CT14 6PY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01304 374951
<b>Fax number</b>	01304 380896
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@sandown.kent.sch.uk

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<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	23–24 February 2012
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Wendy Simmons

Additional inspector

Carol Vant

Additional inspector

Neil McDonough

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 26 lessons. Some observations lasted more than 25 minutes and others included shorter visits to classes. Twelve teachers were observed and discussions were held with teachers and teaching assistants. The inspectors held meetings with different groups of pupils and listened to pupils read. They scrutinised samples of pupils' work. Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the new headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector met with two representatives of the governing body in addition to representatives of the local authority.

The inspection took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), observed the school's work and looked at documentation, especially that linked to the school's development plans, assessment data, governors' minutes and evidence concerning the quality of teaching. Inspectors evaluated the responses to the questionnaires from pupils, staff and 147 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

This school is larger than the average sized primary school. Early Years Foundation Stage children work in two adjoining Reception classes. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The governing body manages a breakfast and after-school club.

In the last two terms, there have been significant staffing difficulties in the school. The former headteacher left the school at Christmas 2011 and was replaced by an interim headteacher. Six days prior to the inspection, an acting headteacher started to run the school; he was formerly the acting deputy headteacher. Currently, the school does not have a deputy headteacher. The new headteacher is due to join the school formally in April 2012 and she was present during the inspection on a visiting basis.

The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>4</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. This is not a satisfactory school because of weaknesses in leadership, the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement in English and mathematics.
- The school does not demonstrate sufficient capacity for improvement. There is not a fully established senior management team, and leadership has been reliant on external support from the local authority. The leadership of teaching and the management of teachers’ performance, although recently strengthened, are inadequate. The school has not taken sufficient action on previous inspection recommendations. The new headteacher and acting headteacher have not yet had time to make a sustained impact on the school, but the acting headteacher has already begun to make important changes.
- Since 2009, levels of attainment have shown little sign of improvement. Progress is uneven and inadequate overall between Years 1 and 6. In particular, boys, those known to be eligible for free school meals, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs underachieve. Children’s progress, learning and achievement are satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage with some elements of good provision.
- While some teaching is good, there is too much inadequate teaching in the school. It lacks challenge, fails to meet pupils’ specific needs or does not allow skills to build up well from day-to-day because of shortcomings in teachers’ planning and the curriculum. As a result, too many pupils do not show proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils’ behaviour and safety are satisfactory overall. This is a calm and well-ordered school, where strong relationships help pupils to feel happy and safe.

Pupils' behaviour in and around school is good. However, sometimes pupils are very passive in lessons and lack real engagement with learning. Pupils' attendance is above average. They thoroughly enjoy the many additional sporting and artistic activities.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - rigorously monitoring and re-visiting lessons to eradicate inadequate teaching, checking that pupils are thoroughly engaged and inspired
  - closely monitoring the impact of strategies to accelerate progress of all groups, especially boys, those known to be eligible for free school meals and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
  - providing appropriate training to staff in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics
  - improving the planned curriculum and increasing resources
  - establishing greater challenge by the governing body.
  
- Raise pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in English to good by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should do, ensuring that work is planned to meet pupils' differing abilities
  - improving the teaching of phonics (the way sounds and letters are linked) especially at Key Stage 1
  - ensuring that boys are challenged and excited by reading and writing
  - making sure that pupils know and use their improvement targets
  - ensuring that teachers mark pupils' written work effectively, so that pupils know exactly how to improve their skills
  - helping pupils to edit, extend and improve their writing more often
  - linking reading and writing more with visits, visitors and other subjects.
  
- Urgently accelerate pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in mathematics by:
  - ensuring a progressive approach to the teaching of calculation skills
  - checking carefully that pupils know and use their targets for improvement
  - ensuring work is matched to pupils' abilities
  - making sure that pupils practise, know and understand their times tables and use jottings to show different methods of calculation
  - providing more interesting real-life problem solving across the curriculum
  - ensuring that older pupils have a good understanding about decimals and percentages.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Attainment is below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are over a year behind the national average for this group. Although girls' attainment is average by the end of Year 6, boys are at least six months behind. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are often at least a year behind the average and, all too often, this group has made little or no progress in some years.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make steady progress. Sometimes, progress is good. For example, they were observed working cooperatively when making things such as three-dimensional glasses and enjoying researching using reference books. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have a good understanding about phonics and build up suitable early reading skills as a result. For example, they blend three-letter words well and more able children do such things as convert a word such as 'frog' into 'flag'. Children's social skills are well developed and they make a secure start to counting. Writing skills are often suitably promoted but opportunities are missed to accelerate boys' progress in play activities.

The strong start in phonics and reading is not built upon well enough in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are not skilled enough in dividing up sounds to help spelling and do not spell common words accurately; spelling remains inadequate throughout the school. Reading tasks lack challenge and are not carefully organised to meet pupils' differing capabilities, and reading skills are below average by the end of Year 2. It is only very recently that additional catch-up activities have focused on improving phonic skills for pupils in Years 3 and 4. The impact of this is yet to be seen, but a lack of suitable resources is hampering this support. Reading remains below average at the end of Year 6.

Overall, opportunities for pupils to edit and improve their writing are too limited and this hampers them from making faster progress. However, there are occasional examples of good practice, as seen in one Year 2 class when the teacher skilfully showed pupils how to edit sentences by linking two simple sentences together with a connecting word when writing about 'The Giant Turnip'. Additionally, the work seen in Year 6 sometimes guides pupils in how to amend their work to make more complex sentences. In these examples, pupils are challenged to use higher level writing skills.

In mathematics, too many pupils are not making the progress they should. Pupils' calculation skills are not always effective enough to enable them to work on problem solving activities. For example, in Key Stage 2, some pupils have little understanding of the multiplication tables. Although pupils in Years 5 and 6 are helped to be more confident in using their tables, this is too late to enable them to be established as good independent mathematicians. Older pupils confirmed that they do not have enough understanding of decimals and percentages. A sample of work showed that pupils do not use jottings enough to explain their calculations, so have no record to

refer to and consolidate their understanding and verbal explanations.

Most parents and carers identified in their questionnaires that their children make good progress. A few parents and carers commented that they had concerns, a view that this inspection endorses as pupils underachieve in this school.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers feel that teaching is often good; inspectors do not endorse this view as the teaching is inadequate overall in Years 1 to 6. Discussions with pupils indicate that they sometimes find lessons, in their words, 'boring'. Typically, relationships are good in lessons but lesson planning does not take adequate enough account of pupils' different needs and abilities. As a consequence, some work is either too easy or too difficult for pupils and this slows their progress. For example, Year 2 pupils did not have the background understanding to carry out work on doubling measurements with decimals. The Year 3 work on symmetry was too easy for the most able pupils but those of lower ability found the activity confusing.

Some lessons are good, with well-chosen activities that stimulate pupils' imagination. For example, boys and girls were totally absorbed by writing an African story about 'How the baboon got its bare bottom'. It is not uncommon for interesting discussion work to take place within lessons but provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is variable within lessons and between classes. Pupils enjoy undertaking interesting challenges although they are not having enough opportunities to think hard and use their research skills across the curriculum. Real-life problem solving is inconsistently promoted in mathematics. There is, however, good independent work in Years 5 and 6 about mountains and the 'Blue Planet'.

Too much teaching is inadequate and the pace of learning too slow because the planned activities do not provide a step-by-step approach to learning. Leaders have plans to review the curriculum to address this. Teachers' expectations are often not high enough. This was evident within guided reading activities where pupils who were not working with an adult did not have suitably challenging activities, and this led to a high proportion of pupils making slow or inadequate progress. Adults' use of questioning does not always probe and accelerate pupils' skills quickly. Teachers mark pupils' written work but do not ensure that pupils know exactly how to improve their skills or understand the next steps. Some pupils are not clear enough about their English and mathematics targets to use them to accelerate progress.

There has been recent training about how to teach phonics, but teachers' skills are still not good enough, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Moreover there is too much inconsistency in the way that the new phonics curriculum is used, which does not build on the good start made in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and slows rather than accelerates pupils' progress.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Typically, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Discussions with pupils confirmed that they mostly enjoy school and this is endorsed by their above average rates of

attendance and good punctuality. Parents and carers agree that their children are safe and pupils largely agree. Parents and carers noted that behaviour is usually good so that only occasionally are lessons disrupted. Pupils agree that pupils are usually polite and often kind to others. Aggressive behaviour is very uncommon. There are no major disruptions to learning because the school's behaviour management procedures are usually clearly followed. However, lessons are often over-directed by teachers. As a result, although pupils behave well on the surface, they are not always well engaged in their learning. Opportunities are missed to promote approaches to independent learning which might enable pupils to develop sustained concentration, curiosity and a real passion for learning. There is helpful support for pupils with specific behavioural difficulties. There have been no recent exclusions.

Pupils know about different kinds of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and persistent name calling. They confirmed that a few incidences of bullying have been identified but action to reduce bullying has been effective. They show respect for different cultures, religions and family circumstances by not using racist or sexist remarks.

### **Leadership and management**

Important recent initiatives have been taken to improve the tracking of pupils' progress, training for staff and monitoring of performance. However, there are failings in leadership in some key stages, core subjects and for the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Professional development has had uneven impact. Although lessons observations have been carried out, follow up actions have not been sufficient in their impact to eradicate any inadequate teaching and learning. Assessment procedures have been through a series of changes to make them more effective but there has not been enough perceptive analysis of the performance of the school. The school has not demonstrated the capacity to improve and no longer retains the status of being a good school, as was the case at the last inspection. Intervention by the local authority has been a significant wake-up call for the school. Representatives of the governing body explained: 'Leadership had become too complacent and communication and teamwork have not been as good as they should have been.'

The governing body is fully involved in the daily life of the school, but confirms that it has not challenged the school enough in the past. It is only recently that governors have gained an appropriate understanding about the progress of different groups of learners. They now realise that there is far more to do to ensure that the school successfully promotes equality for all. Action has not been taken to ensure pupils from different groups do equally well. In October 2011, there was a review of safeguarding procedures and requirements are currently met. The governing body is now being given regular feedback about safeguarding matters.

The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a welcoming ethos where pupils enjoy an interesting range of additional activities that ensures steady progress in their learning and personal development. The youngest Early Years Foundation Stage children are fully integrated with older pupils and this enriches their social skills well.



In the school as a whole, leaders have ensured that a lively curriculum in the arts and sports satisfactorily promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is adequate provision for pupils to explore different cultures and religions. However, the curriculum is inadequate because it is failing to ensure that pupils have strong basic skills and develop a real wonder, curiosity and excitement when learning. A recent initiative to raise the profile of books and authors' work in school is a good move but too many teachers are not making the most of the potential of visits to enrich, extend and enthuse learners. There are some examples of subjects being linked together in interesting themes, but inadequate planning and inconsistencies do not sustain good learning across the school.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



26 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Sandown School, Deal CT14 6PY**

I am writing to thank you for helping us to find out all about your school. It was a pleasure to read your completed questionnaires and talk to so many of you. You are very polite and the school is calm and welcoming. You attend regularly and are punctual.

Your parents and carers are mostly pleased with your school. Inspectors, however, are concerned that teaching, together with your progress, is not as good as it should be. Although some teaching is good there is not enough of this quality. Also, over the past few years, not enough has been done to improve the school. We have decided that your school needs 'special measures'. This means that your school is going to have a lot of extra help to improve. The acting headteacher and new headteacher are extremely keen and committed to improving the school for you, because they know that you deserve the very best. We want you to be as excited by reading, writing and mathematics as possible and so we have asked that:

- school leaders keep a very close watch on the quality of teaching as well as your learning
- the school improves the way that reading, writing and mathematics are taught; making sure work is not too hard and not too easy
- you are told how to improve your work and know what your targets are. Please work as hard as you can on these
- mathematics lessons help you to improve your knowledge of times tables, decimals and percentages, and teachers make sure you jot down how you have done your calculations.

You can help in this by letting your teachers know if you do not understand how to improve your work. I wish you every success.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons  
Lead inspector

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