

Sandown Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114447
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	357541
Inspection dates	28–29 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Peter Thrussell

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	399
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Matt Carter
Headteacher	Tim Luckcock (interim headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2008
School address	The Ridge Hastings East Sussex TN34 2AA
Telephone number	01424436983
Fax number	01424 722817
Email address	office@sandownprimary.e-sussex.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	28–29 March 2011
Inspection number	357541

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fourteen different teachers were observed teaching 15 lessons. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents, including the school improvement plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner, data on pupils' progress, and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also evaluated work in pupils' books and considered the results of inspection questionnaires returned by staff, pupils and 39 from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether learning and progress are improving sufficiently to suggest that the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory.
- The pace and challenge in lessons, and whether ongoing assessment is used well enough to match work to ability and to show pupils how well they are doing and how they could improve their work.
- The extent to which high mobility and low attendance impact on attainment and progress.
- The effectiveness of leaders at all levels, including the governing body, in driving improvement, given the instability in leadership and management in recent years.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above average, with an above-average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. This includes pupils with moderate learning difficulties and those with behavioural, emotional and social needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are catered for in two Reception classes. The previous headteacher and deputy left during 2009. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in 2010. Since the start of 2010, the school has been led by an acting headteacher, and then by an interim headteacher. A new headteacher has been appointed and will take up the post at the start of the summer term. There is an independently run on-site Nursery which is not part of this inspection. The school has Healthy School status.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**4****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main 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 significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to raising attainment and progress, and the level of attendance.

In the past three years, attainment by the end of Year 6 has been significantly low in English and mathematics. Pupils, especially across Key Stage 2, until recently have not been making sufficient progress, and consequently too many are working at levels below those expected for their age. This is compounded by low rates of attendance, which the school has started to address. The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that there has been a gradual improvement in mathematics in the last two years, with an increasing proportion reaching the expected Level 4. Across the school, there has also been an improvement in the proportion of pupils making the expected progress in mathematics. These improvements have been brought about through a whole-school focus on the teaching of mathematics, with an emphasis on applying calculation skills to problem solving. The school has recognised that similar improvements are urgently needed in reading and writing. It has plans in place for this, based on accurate self-evaluation. Pupils now have daily sessions for learning sounds and letters in Key Stage 1, and regular guided reading sessions in Key Stage 2. These are beginning to improve the progress that pupils make in their literacy skills. Other recent improvements can be seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children are now provided with a good start to their education. These improvements demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The deputy headteacher has implemented new procedures for tracking pupils' progress and identifying underachievement. This information is now shared with staff and the governing body so that all are aware of the level of underperformance in the school and their accountability for this. Previously, assessment information had not been shared sufficiently, and therefore underachievement was not fully recognised and acted on. The school is now in a better position to initiate a range of interventions to help pupils make up for lost ground in their learning. Although starting to have a positive impact, these interventions have yet to be fully monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness.

Teachers use assessment information to form ability groups in their lessons. However they are not as competent in using ongoing assessments to plan precisely the next steps in pupils' learning, so that work at times proves too difficult for some and lacks challenge for others. The pace of learning is sometimes too slow, especially when introductions are overly long and pupils are not given enough time to complete tasks. Although 'talking with a partner' is a positive feature of many lessons, discussion and questioning with adults

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

throughout lessons do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to share ideas and develop a fuller understanding of what is being learned. The use of individual targets and informative marking to show pupils how to improve their work is inconsistent and contributes to their underachievement. The school, through its own recent monitoring, has identified these points and, with some coaching, has raised the quality of teaching to an overall satisfactory level. However, judgments on the quality of teaching are sometimes too generous and do not take sufficient account of its impact on learning and progress.

The interim headteacher has quickly gained the support of staff and the governing body, and has helped to raise morale. With the support of the local authority, a 'Transformation Plan' has been put in place. All are aware of the actions in it that are well tailored to school improvement. Good succession arrangements for the newly appointed headteacher mean that he is already a part of this drive for school improvement, recognising that the school leadership needs to be developed and restructured for maximum impact.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and progress in English and mathematics by improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning, ensuring that:
 - teachers use day-to-day assessment competently to plan the next steps in pupils' learning
 - teachers and teaching assistants take time to question pupils and discuss activities with them, in order to check their understanding and encourage independent learning
 - individual targets and marking are used consistently to show pupils how to improve their work
 - learning proceeds at a quicker pace in lessons.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
 - rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching as well as any additional support through interventions, and relating this to the progress made by pupils
 - using assessment information to quickly identify underachievement, which leads to swift and effective intervention to support improvement
 - establishing a strong leadership team with shared roles and responsibilities.
- Raise the level of attendance by:
 - fully implementing planned actions
 - engaging more effectively with parents and carers to help them realise the importance of regular attendance for their children's learning and progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Children in the Reception classes make good progress from starting points that are well below those expected for children of this age. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, but achievement overall is inadequate as learning and progress in Key Stage 2, although satisfactory, are not improving quickly enough to raise low levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar 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

to others. Pupils say they enjoy lessons, mostly paying good attention, even when the pace of learning is too slow. This was seen in a lesson where pupils were making and organising notes on characters from Tudor times. The introduction was too long and the focus on using subheadings was not clear. Throughout this time, many pupils were just waiting to get on with their different character studies. Some paired discussion showed that many already knew about organising their notes, and could therefore have made more progress in the lesson. Progress was also restricted in a mathematics lesson where pupils were working on problem solving related to sharing amounts. While most pupils could see what they needed to do to solve the different problems, some did not have the number skills to work out the answers. Although teaching assistants helped pupils individually, there was too little group discussion and questioning to check pupils' understanding.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe in school and know who to turn to if they have any worries. Minor concerns are often sorted out by pupils acting as peer mentors. A small minority of pupils expressed concern about behaviour. The behaviour policy has recently been reviewed and is now applied consistently, so that behaviour in lessons and around school has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of how to eat healthily and of the importance of physical exercise. The school is supported effectively by a sports partnership with a local secondary school, this work has been recognised through a national Healthy School award. Pupils' contribution to the school and local community is satisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to work independently are not consistently promoted. Along with low standards in core subjects and low attendance, this means that pupils are not adequately prepared for the next stage in their education.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching although satisfactory, is not yet strong enough to lift low attainment, particularly across Key Stage 2. This quality is beginning to improve and some good lessons were observed during the inspection, where work was well matched to pupils' different abilities. Through discussion and careful questioning, pupils understood what they were learning and were therefore able to keep a close check on their own progress. However, a small minority of pupils noted in their inspection questionnaire that they did not know how well they were doing in school. Through training and improved procedures for assessing pupils' progress in writing, teachers are becoming more competent in making assessments of pupils' written work. Similar procedures are now being introduced for reading and mathematics, to help teachers assess ongoing progress and focus their lesson planning on pupils' different abilities with greater accuracy.

The curriculum makes adequate provision for English, mathematics and information and communication technology. The most recent review has taken 'quality texts' as a focus, using these to provide themed days that puts learning into context. To facilitate this, major improvements have been made to the library and the way books are allocated across the school. Other cross-curricular work has been planned that is adding interest and purpose to pupils' learning and providing opportunities for them to apply their literacy, numeracy and other skills. These different approaches have yet to be fully evaluated for their impact on pupils' attainment and progress. A satisfactory range of after-school

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

activities is popular with pupils and effectively contributes to their personal and social development.

Pupils who attend the breakfast club receive a warm welcome at the start of the day. The school works closely with the parents and carers of potentially vulnerable pupils, such as those with personal and behavioural difficulties. Good links with outside specialists and well-managed provision within school ensure that these needs are mostly met. Recently improved procedures to support pupils who transfer into the school, such as family interviews, contact with previous schools and a warm welcome, have yet to raise their level of progress and bring it in line with that of other pupils. More rigorous follow-up procedures for attendance have been introduced, with certificates awarded to pupils for improvements, but these have yet to show any significant impact on raising the school's low level of attendance. There are good transition arrangements for pupils moving on to secondary schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders, staff and the governing body have a strong commitment to bringing about improvements. They are clear about where the school needs to improve, and are taking well-planned actions to bring this about, which are starting to meet with success. The governing body is well informed of these actions and is starting to challenge the school on its effectiveness in raising attainment and progress. It also ensures that good safeguarding arrangements are in place and fully adhered to. There is a thorough, well-recorded check made on the suitability of adults working in the school. The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory, to an extent reflected in the low response to the inspection questionnaire and the small number of concerns expressed. A school social networking forum, by computer, is helping to forge closer links that allow concerns to be shared, and keeps parents and carers better informed of what is going on in school and of the support they can give to their children's learning. Partnerships are used well to promote pupils' personal development and well-being, but have yet to have sufficient impact on their learning. Inconsistencies in learning and progress across the school mean that the promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory rather than good. The school takes positive steps to tackle any discrimination. It promotes pupils' understanding and respect of different communities satisfactorily, especially at a local level. An appropriate action plan is in place to develop and extend the promotion of community cohesion further.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in Reception and make good progress in the different areas of learning. This provides them with the skills and knowledge to effectively support their transition to Year 1. Good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly and promote good links with parents and carers. Along with close links with the on-site Nursery, this helps staff to assess children's interests, aptitudes and starting points. Effective management and good provision ensure that children quickly become active learners. They behave well and understand the rules set for their own safety. Relationships are positive and contribute to children's good attitudes to learning. They willingly participate in all teacher-directed sessions and cooperate well during child-initiated activities, enjoying, for example, their role play about The Three Little Pigs. Children move freely between the two classrooms using the 'magic door', and the outdoor area. The outdoor area has recently been reconstructed, but has yet to be fully resourced to reflect the different areas of learning. Staff work well together and are sensitive to children's welfare needs. Assistants do not always engage sufficiently with children in their play, so that opportunities are missed to assess the progress children are making and to promote further learning. Regular meetings are held with staff that focus on children's development and progress. Information about children's learning and development is well recorded and evidenced in individual learning journals. These meetings have helped to increase the rate of children's progress and improve the quality of teaching and the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A relatively low number of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. A very small minority of these are unhappy about their children's experiences of school. They feel the school does not take enough account of their concerns, help them to support their children's learning, promote healthy lifestyles or prepare their children adequately for the future. Other concerns were raised about behaviour and the leadership of the school. These matters are reported on in the main body of the report. Individual concerns were discussed anonymously with the school and did not indicate any trend of concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sandown Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 399 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	49	16	41	3	8	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	18	46	16	41	4	10	1	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	33	20	51	4	10	2	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	33	21	54	2	5	3	8
The teaching is good at this school	16	41	19	49	2	5	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	28	20	51	7	18	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	26	21	54	5	13	2	5
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	13	33	16	41	8	21	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	31	20	51	4	10	2	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	33	16	41	2	5	7	18
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	31	17	44	2	5	6	15
The school is led and managed effectively	12	31	16	41	3	8	6	15
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	38	18	46	3	8	3	8

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



30 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sandown Primary School, Hastings TN34 2AA

Thank you for helping us with the inspection. We spoke with some of you during our visit and you were interesting to talk to, polite and helpful. You told us how much you enjoy school and about all the things you do. Your school does some things well but needs to improve other things quite quickly. Therefore your school has been given a 'notice to improve'. You will have another visit from an inspector to check how well the school is improving.

These are the things that the school does well.

- Children in the Reception classes get off to a good start.
- The school looks after you well.
- You know how to keep yourselves safe and who to turn to if you have any problems.
- You know the right things to eat and the importance of taking regular exercise.
- Your interim headteacher has done a good job and has already helped the school to make some improvements.

We have asked the school to work on the following things:

- help you to do better in English and mathematics by giving you work that is right for each one of you, neither too hard nor too easy, talking with you more in lessons, using targets and marking to show you how to improve your work, and ensuring that you have as much time in lessons as possible to work quickly and to complete your tasks.
- check that teaching is of the best quality and that where you need additional support, this is helping you to catch up in your learning. To do this, those who lead your school, with your new headteacher, need to work well together as a team.
- You all need to attend school regularly in order to get the best out of your time here. The school must help your parents and carers to understand the importance of regular attendance.

Thank you again for your help. You can all help the school to improve by working hard in lessons, attending regularly and getting to school on time.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.