

# Sandown Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	114447
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	385855
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Sheena MacDonald HMI

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>	389
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matt Carter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Charles Lindsay
<b>School address</b>	The Ridge Hastings East Sussex TN34 2AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 436983
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	29–30 May 2012
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Sheena MacDonald

Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter Gale

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sheila Browning

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons, involving all teachers, and carried out several shorter observations and brief visits to lessons throughout the school to look at the quality of learning. They held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, talked with pupils, heard several read, and discussed reading and writing with them, looked at case studies relating to a sample of pupils, and scrutinised pupils' books. They looked at the school improvement plan, monitoring and assessment information, the governing body minutes, and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding. There were 90 responses for inspectors to consider from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) when preparing for the inspection and the inspectors took account of the responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and 196 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around 45% and has risen significantly over recent years. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with a small group of pupils from other ethnic groups. Overall, the proportion of disabled pupils and those identified with special educational needs is about average but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is an independently run on-site nursery which was not part of this inspection.

The school does not meet the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

At the previous inspection in March 2011, the school was issued with a notice to improve. In November 2011, a monitoring visit was carried out and the school was judged to be making inadequate progress on the areas identified for improvement, and the visit raised serious concerns.

**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>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- 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. Since the last inspection, and particularly since the monitoring visit, senior leaders have acted swiftly so that improvements have been achieved in all key areas. The school is satisfactory rather than good because the quality of teaching and the curriculum are not consistently good and, as a result, there is some unevenness in pupils' progress and attainment is still lower than it could be. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- After a good start in the Reception class, pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Many more pupils are achieving at the levels expected for their ages than was the case in the past.
- There are pockets of good teaching where pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the quality of teaching is inconsistent and teachers do not always plan learning activities to ensure that all pupils are fully supported and challenged. The quality of the support provided by teaching assistants also varies considerably. Pupils do not have the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking and so improve their work.
- There has been a significant improvement in pupils' behaviour and attitudes, and this makes a strong contribution to the school and their learning. Pupils feel safe and happy in school: they enjoy their learning and, as a result, attendance is improving strongly.
- The headteacher has achieved a great deal in a relatively short time and this is recognised by parents and carers, pupils and staff, who are positive about the improvements. Senior leaders now accurately and rigorously monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning. Staff performance is managed well. The school is moving rapidly in the right direction. The leadership skills and the

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impact of subject leaders are underdeveloped and the wider curriculum does not yet fully meet the needs and interests of all pupils.

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

- Raise attainment and accelerate the rate of progress in English and mathematics by:
  - raising expectations about the quality, quantity and challenge in pupils' work
  - improving the use of assessment information during lessons so that all pupils have work which is well matched to their abilities
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that most teaching is good or better by:
  - using the good practice which exists in the school to ensure that all teaching is as good as the best
  - ensuring that teaching assistants have clear guidance and training so that their support is consistently good.
- Improve the curriculum by:
  - ensuring that it is well planned and enables pupils to learn in depth across different subjects
  - increasing planned opportunities to develop literacy and mathematics skills through other subjects
  - developing the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders to increase the impact they have on teaching and learning in different subjects.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers believe that their children make good progress. However, improvements in attainment and progress are uneven across the school and so overall achievement is satisfactory rather than good. The starting points for most pupils are well below average and, although they make good progress in Reception, this has not, in the past, been maintained so that, by the end of Year 6, attainment has been well below average and pupils have not made sufficient progress. This weakness is being rigorously addressed and the quality of learning in lessons is improving. This is reflected in the school's accurate records of pupils' progress and in pupils' books, which show that, although attainment is still below average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, in reading, writing and mathematics, it is rising more rapidly this academic year.

Information regarding pupils' progress is carefully analysed to target support for individual pupils and groups. Intervention activities are evaluated to make sure they

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are having sufficient impact. As a result, pupils such as those with special educational needs and those eligible for free school meals, who had fallen the furthest behind, are now making at least satisfactory progress.

Improvement is most evident in pupils' reading skills. This is due to the introduction of a systematic approach to teaching pupils the links between letters and sounds (phonics) and regular opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills in guided reading sessions. Pupils' enjoyment and increasing confidence in reading is clear. They use their knowledge of phonics well to read unfamiliar words, although sometimes their understanding of what the words mean is less secure. Progress in mathematics has also improved, however older pupils still have gaps in their knowledge such as in their recall of multiplication tables. Achievement in writing is lower than in reading and mathematics, and, although the children in Reception are very keen to write and share their writing, this enthusiasm is not as evident elsewhere, nor are there many examples of pupils' good writing around the school.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners and cooperate well in lessons. Their achievement in English and mathematics is improving. Achievement in other subjects is patchier because of more limited opportunities to explore learning across the curriculum.

### **Quality of teaching**

The vast majority of parents believe that teaching is good. Inspectors, though, agree with the senior leadership team's judgement that, while there is some good teaching, overall, the quality is satisfactory. This is because it is not yet consistently good across the school and over time.

Lessons are well organised with clear routines and opportunities for pupils to develop good personal and social skills such as working collaboratively and discussing their learning. Teachers routinely plan lessons with clear learning objectives and activities which take account of different abilities. In the more effective lessons, the pace is lively, activities are interesting, and there is effective support and challenge to extend the learning. An example of this was seen in the Reception classes when children excitedly explored a variety of science activities. Good quality questioning and adult prompting helped them to explore and extend their learning.

These features are not consistent across the school, however, and in too many lessons teachers' expectations and the level of challenge are still too low. Assessment information is not always used effectively so that activities are not well matched to different abilities. As a result, pupils sometimes consolidate learning rather than learning new skills. Occasionally, teachers and teaching assistants give too much direction so that the pupils do not have the chance to think or work independently. Pupils all know their targets in writing and mathematics, and are able to say in general terms what they need to do to improve their work. However, they are not given sufficient opportunity to respond to teachers' marking.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. The vast majority of parents, carers and pupils believe that behaviour is good and that children are very safe in school. They consider that the behaviour management systems are having a positive impact. Pupils were particularly positive about the rewards system and the Funky Friday assemblies when achievements are celebrated. One parent who was initially sceptical about the system was won over because of the positive impact and commented, 'I am astonished at what smelly stickers can achieve!'

The number of instances of poor behaviour has dropped dramatically. Pupils who have particular difficulties in managing their emotions and behaviour are supported well. The positive impact of the nurture group provision is evident in the way pupils reintegrate into the main classes and make rapid progress in their learning as well as in developing positive relationships with others. The well-run breakfast and after-school clubs provide good opportunities for pupils to mix socially and enjoy each other's company. Attendance was much lower than average in the past but, over the past year, there has been strong improvement so that it is similar to the national average now and better than other schools in similar areas.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. Positive routines and relationships, and strong personal and social education, reinforce expectations about behaviour and contribute to an ethos of cooperation and kindness. A good example of this was seen during the inspection when Year 4 pupils took on different roles and discussed ways in which members of a community could take responsibility for looking after a local environment. Pupils are confident that they are making a strong personal contribution to the school and, in the words of the school motto, are striving 'to be the best that we can be'.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher and the newly formed senior leadership team are working increasingly well to implement effective monitoring, identify strengths and weaknesses, and provide support and training. Inadequate performance is robustly challenged. This has led to improvements in behaviour, attendance and safety. The quality of teaching has also improved and the combined effect of these changes means that attainment is rising.

The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination. The identification of vulnerable pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs, has improved significantly and the school works well with families and other professionals to support their specific needs. Information regarding pupils' progress is analysed to identify groups of pupils who have not been achieving as well as others, such as boys and pupils eligible for free school meals. The curriculum for these pupils is amended to provide activities including a boys' writing group, and small group and individual support. These strategies are meeting their needs increasingly effectively so that barriers are reducing and gaps in learning are beginning to close.

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The quality of partnership with parents and carers has improved and this is evident in the number who returned questionnaires compared with the previous inspection. Most parents and carers say they are well informed and feel that the school responds well to any concerns. Arrangements for safeguarding are securely in place and parents and carers agree that their children are safe in school. Pupils comment that they feel safe, especially now that behaviour has improved so much.

Improving pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the curriculum in English and mathematics have been the main focus during the year. There has been less time to develop the curriculum in other subjects, and opportunities for pupils to apply literacy and mathematics skills in other subjects are limited. The positive ethos of the school supports pupils' social and moral development. Pupils experience excitement in learning such as the science events during the inspection but opportunities to reflect on wider issues are relatively limited, and this restricts pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school is aware of this and is reviewing the whole curriculum.

There is a very clear sense of purpose and direction. Improvement planning is sharply focused on raising attainment and, as targets are achieved, they are revised upwards. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and is fully involved in the forward momentum of the school. As the senior leadership team becomes established and increasingly effective, the school is rightly turning its attention to the development of subject and middle leaders whose roles are currently underdeveloped and whose impact is limited. The progress the school has made since the previous inspection on key aspects such as achievement and behaviour show that it has a satisfactory capacity to ensure further improvement.



## 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.**



31 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Sandown Primary School, Hastings TN34 2AA**

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we visited your school recently. When your school was last inspected, the inspectors judged that things were not good enough and your school was given a notice to improve. You, your parents, carers and school staff told us that, since then, there has been a lot of improvement and, after having a very close look at all sorts of things, including coming into lots of your lessons, we agree. We think that your school is now giving you a satisfactory education.

There is one important aspect that is good. You told us that the biggest improvement has been in the behaviour in school and how safe you feel. You want to learn and you cooperate very well with each other and with the adults. You are coming to school more regularly, too, now. Well done!

You get off to a really good start in the Reception class. In the rest of the school, your achievement is satisfactory. This is for two reasons. Your achievement was not good enough in the past, and there was a lot of catching up to do, and you learn more in some lessons than in others. We were especially pleased to see that some of you who had fallen further behind are catching up fast.

We think, and we know your headteacher agrees with us, that you could achieve even better. We have asked the teachers to share their good ideas and make sure the work is just right for you: not too hard and, especially, not too easy. We think the school should make sure that you get the chance to learn more about lots of different subjects.

All of you can help by always doing your very best. Thank you again for your help and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sheena MacDonald  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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