

Sandown Primary School

Golf Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6PY

Inspection dates 13–14 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Sandown is now a good school. Pupils make quicker progress and achieve well because teaching has improved and learning activities are more exciting.
- Results in English and mathematics for Year 6 in the last national tests were the highest for some time. Current pupils are attaining at higher levels still.
- Pupils speak confidently to adults and each other. Their ability to read and enjoy books has increased to good levels.
- Teaching is typically good and, as a result, pupils enjoy their learning and are more confident in gaining basic skills.
- Support for those pupils who find learning difficult, and pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding, is effective so that these pupils also achieve well.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start in the Reception classes. They gain confident social and personal skills, while developing secure early number, writing, and reading skills.
- Pupils say 'things have changed for the better' since the previous inspection. Their behaviour has improved and pupils are polite and mature in and out of the classroom. They feel safe in school.
- Senior leaders, including governors, have been determined and successful in remedying weaknesses in teaching and pupils' levels of achievement. Regular checks on teaching and pupils' work provide the headteacher and governors with a clear picture of how to make the school even better.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always confident to spell accurately in Years 3 to 6 which detracts from the quality of their otherwise interesting writing.
- The quality of teaching is not at the highest levels yet, as teachers sometimes miss opportunities to link class activities to pupils' everyday experiences or stretch the abilities of the most able pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The school had been subject to special measures following its inspection in February 2012. Inspectors made two monitoring visits in the following June and November to check the school's progress.
- The inspectors observed 15 part lessons taught by 11 teachers, of which four were joint observations conducted with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors briefly observed activities such as the breakfast club and after-school club.
- The inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6 and observed playtime and lunchtime routines. They observed one class assembly.
- Meetings were held with a representative group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other members, and staff, including those responsible for leading different subjects. Information was examined which related to pupils who may be disabled or who have special educational needs.
- The inspectors took account of 26 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and also analysed questionnaires recently sent out to parents.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's checks on teaching, governors' visits and meetings, planning, internal pupil progress information and records relating to behaviour and attendance, together with documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Saltmarsh

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- Sandown is bigger in size than most primary schools. The number of pupils attending has risen since the previous inspection.
- A higher than average proportion is eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children from service families).
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than normally found.
- The majority of pupils are White British and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic heritages. There are very few at the early stages of learning English.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club which is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that pupils make even faster progress by:
 - giving pupils in Years 3 to 6 extra help to spell confidently to enhance the quality of their writing even further
 - ensuring, when possible, those pupils through the school who are more able are really stretched in their thinking so they achieve exceptionally well
 - giving pupils in Years 1 to 6 more opportunities to use their accurate number, shape and problem-solving skills in real-life investigative activities
 - ensuring that the increasing range of creative, exciting and meaningful activities is extended to all classes through the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress so they achieve well, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. In national tests, pupils now reach broadly average levels and current pupils in Year 6 are on track to improve upon last year's results. The few gaps in learning between boys and girls are now narrowing quickly.
- Children enter the school with skills and abilities which are much lower than typical for their age. In Reception, they make good progress in their early reading and writing skills, as well as increasing their social confidence. They work together well, such as those working in the imaginary 'construction site' or repairing the 'pirate ship' to extend their physical skills, and a good variety of activities help develop their speaking, listening and social skills in fun ways.
- Pupils write creatively, including about the Beatles, the Second World War, and turning stories into plays. While pupils generally write creatively and spell with increasing accuracy, not enough pupils in Years 3 to 6 are confident spellers when writing longer accounts.
- In mathematics, pupils develop accurate number and problem-solving skills and pupils quickly identify two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. In a well taught lesson in Year 6, pupils readily understood how to work out coordinates, related to studying a story based around the Scilly Isles.
- Reading standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are now securely average, and improving. In their first national screening phonics (learning letter sounds and combinations) check, the school reached average levels. In Reception to Year 2, children and pupils develop a good knowledge of letters and sounds to aid their writing, reading and enjoyment of books. Pupils clearly enjoyed the whole-school focus on one author and the story of *The Gruffalo*. Pupils readily recount how much they enjoyed the stories and making a number of different models.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding have improved their achievement, making up for past weaker teaching. The differences in average point scores in English and mathematics between these and all pupils are reducing quickly with others nationally. The provision of extra staff, increased resources, such as tablet computers, and extra help that is matched closely to pupils' needs, has raised their achievement to good levels.
- Nearly all groups make similarly good progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Adults are skilful at providing relevant and engaging activities for those pupils with behavioural or academic needs. This also helps ensure that all pupils are given an equal chance to learn and make good progress, including pupils from different ethnic heritages or the very few who may be at the early stages of learning English. Occasionally, those pupils who are more able are not always fully stretched in their learning, but their desire to work hard, along with all pupils, is increasing the volume and quality of work they complete.

The quality of teaching is good

- The typical quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils say that teachers 'now make learning fun'. Teachers are skilful in developing specific displays and activities designed to make most pupils reflect and think.
- Children in the Reception classes benefit from activities which capture their interests, as there is a good combination between the activities children choose for themselves and those which are directed by the teacher. The outside area is well used to extend children's physical, imaginative and social skills. Adults support children in their activities well.
- Teachers ensure that pupils now really enjoy reading. Pupils talked enthusiastically about having DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time every day, which includes all teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils say this it is really 'cool' and has raised their enjoyment of reading.
- Teachers' explanations are clear and pupils said they like the more hands-on approach to activities, such as using simple equipment and resources when learning about shadows in a

science lesson in a well-taught lesson in Year 3.

- Occasionally, activities are not always linked with everyday problems to solve, particularly in mathematics, which reduce their relevance or the ability pupils have to see how their skills can be used in day-to-day life.
- Basic skills are generally taught well, such as in an outstanding lesson in a Years 4/5 class where pupils developed an excellent use of different vocabulary to enhance their work. As one pupil said, 'He makes it fun but you do have to work harder as well.' Although pupils enjoy writing, in Years 3 to 6 the direct teaching of phonics has only recently been introduced, so not all pupils are yet fully confident in spelling accurately in their extended writing.
- Pupils say they like having targets, such as aiming for bronze, silver or gold in one class or linked to the speed of their rockets in another. These help them to know how well they are progressing and regular assessments are thorough in identifying those pupils needing extra help or support in their learning. Occasionally, those pupils who are more able say they would like harder work.
- Any pupils who find learning difficult or who receive extra pupil premium funding benefit from a clear structure to lessons and skilful help from extra adults both in class and in small groups adjacent to classrooms. This is enabling them to catch up quickly with others in the class.
- The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are catered for effectively through specific activities pitched appropriately for their needs. This ensures that they also learn well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour has improved to typically good levels. Pupils are kind, polite and mature. They readily talk to visitors about how much the school has improved. Only when the pace of a lesson drops does some pupils' behaviour level drop or their attention wanders.
- The school council has been active in suggesting possible improvements, ranging from arranging the great Sandown Bake Off for Comic Relief to persuading the school to enhance the playground with astroturf.
- The high importance placed on safety by the school has rubbed off on pupils as they report they feel confident that any member of staff will help them should the need arise. They say that instances of bullying are almost non-existent, but they appreciate that this can be in many different forms, including on the internet.
- Parents, who responded to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, indicate they are pleased with the school's approach to reducing bullying and ensuring their children are well behaved and safe. The school's own questionnaire conducted recently indicated a similarly positive response from parents.

The leadership and management are good

- Governors, supported by the local authority, acted very quickly following the last inspection to ensure there was stability in leadership, and the new headteacher has been determined to improve the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and their behaviour quickly. She has succeeded on three fronts.
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching ensure that weaknesses are spotted quickly. Increasingly good links with a partner school to share best practice have broadened teachers' understanding of more effective teaching. Senior leaders ensure that salary levels and promotion tie in with gains in performance of pupils and levels of responsibilities.
- Subject leaders work effectively to identify where improvements are still needed to boost learning in their subjects. They recognise, however, that the greater focus on phonics teaching in Years 3 to 6 has yet to ensure that all pupils are confident spellers.
- The more exciting approach to planning class activities has paid dividends in terms of motivating

pupils to learn. Visits are now planned more regularly and children who visited a local farm centre during the inspection were enthused on their return. While these more exciting activities have been instrumental in raising pupils' achievement, there are still times when not all subjects or classes benefit from these more innovative approaches.

- The local authority has worked well in supporting governors and senior leaders. In view of the school's success, it is now reducing its support to occasional light touch visits to check on the continued progress of the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know the school well and rose quickly to the challenge of tackling the key issues raised. The prompt appointment of a new headteacher resulted in the quick turnaround of the school's performance. Recent training on a number of fronts from health and safety to learning, and in knowing how the school compares to all schools, has been effective. Governors are acutely aware of how extra pupil premium funding is being allocated and regular updates are keeping them abreast of how well these children are achieving. They led a staff development day in order to gain a clearer insight into day-to-day issues for staff and have supported senior leaders effectively in reviewing staff responsibilities, deciding upon levels of pay and how it links with performance in the classroom. Governors have ensured that pupils are safe, staff vetting procedures are thorough and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. They, along with senior leaders, have been effective in keeping parents and carers aware of how the school was progressing, so much so that over 90% say they would recommend the school to other parents.
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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	118573
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	408651

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Teresa Childs
Headteacher	Kate Luxford
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 February 2012
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