

Slindon CofE Primary School

Meadsway, Slindon, Arundel, BN18 0QU

Inspection dates 18–19 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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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.

- The headteacher, ably supported by the staff and governors, has successfully improved the quality of teaching and raised achievement since the last inspection.
- A stimulating curriculum, strong relationships and the school's religious ethos are all factors which underpin this happy and cohesive school.
- Pupils achieve well and develop into mature and sensible young people by the time they leave the school.
- Teaching is consistently good, so that most pupils make good progress across the school.
- Pupils are polite and well behaved. They feel safe in school and are confident that adults will help them with any concerns which may occasionally arise.
- Governors' roles have developed well since the last inspection and they provide good levels of challenge and support to the school's leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to raise pupils' achievement further.
- Occasionally, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve in a given time, so that the pace of learning and progress slows.
- Recent developments to provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics knowledge to solve problems are at an early stage. Sometimes, teachers do not make enough use of practical resources to support pupils' mathematical development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, including three joint lesson observations completed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a local authority representative, senior leaders, parents and carers, staff and pupils.
- The inspector took account of 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in addition to the results of a recent school questionnaire and responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and analysed a range of documents and policies, including the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records, safeguarding documents and a sample of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium in this school is below the national average. Pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils entitled to free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families. The school currently has no children in the latter two groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and of those who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils moving into and out of school, other than at expected times, is above average and increases from Year 2 upwards.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to raise achievement further by:
 - ensuring that expectations about what pupils can achieve in a given time are always high enough, so that learning proceeds at a brisk pace
 - embedding recent improvements in the use of mathematical problem solving so that pupils have more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills
 - making practical resources more accessible in mathematics lessons and showing pupils how they can be used to help them to complete calculations
 - ensuring that there is a clear explanation in lessons about what pupils need to do to be successful and how this is going to move their learning forward.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children's knowledge and skills when they start school in the Reception Year vary widely from year to year. For example, in 2012, children started Reception Year with skills which were generally below those typical for their age, while in 2011, they were in line. Children make good progress during the Reception Year. They behave well and are keen to learn. Interesting lessons and strong relationships mean that children quickly settle and rapidly gain in confidence and self-esteem.
- Inspection evidence, including school information about pupils' progress, lesson observations and the work in pupils' books, shows that pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics as they move up through the school. There are variations in attainment from year to year due to the very small numbers of pupils in each year group, particularly at the end of Year 6. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is typically average.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because, while all groups make good progress overall from their starting points, the progress of some pupils slows when expectations of what pupils can achieve in a given time are not high enough, and the pace of learning in lessons is not sufficiently brisk.
- Pupils who join the school partway through the school receive carefully considered support and are welcomed by pupils already in the school. As a result, they quickly develop a sense of security and belonging, and begin to make progress.
- Pupils enjoy books and achieve well in reading because reading skills are effectively taught across the school. Attainment in reading in 2012 was above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. In 2012, results of the Year 1 phonics screening check concerning the relationship between letters and the sounds were above the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs usually make good progress because the school thoroughly understands their individual needs and provides carefully targeted support.
- Pupil premium is used to fund additional resources, including adult support to provide extra help. Average point scores show that the very few pupils who were eligible to benefit from pupil premium in 2012 reached levels of attainment which were below other pupils in the school and other groups nationally, in both English and mathematics, at the end of Year 6. There were no pupils eligible in the preceding year. School information shows that a number of specific circumstances affected the achievement of these pupils and that they were successfully supported emotionally and behaviourally.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Determination, well-focused training and a whole-school commitment mean that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now typically good. Questioning is effectively used by teachers to explore pupils' views, check their understanding and to ensure that lessons build on what pupils already know. For example, in the Key Stage 1 class, the teacher skilfully explored pupils' understanding of the story she was reading while developing their reading skills.
- Teachers' confident subject knowledge is used to plan stimulating lessons. Occasionally, however, there is a lack of clarity about what pupils need to do to be successful and how this will develop their learning, so that their progress is not maximised.
- Teaching assistants play an active part during lessons, confidently supporting pupils and responding sensitively to their needs as the lesson progresses. As a result, the pupils who work with them, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, usually make good progress.

- In this small school, pupils are grouped flexibly throughout the day according to ability and need to ensure that learning is matched to pupils' needs in mixed-age classes. As a result, most lessons provide appropriate levels of challenge for pupils and move on at a lively pace, so that pupils are attentive and interested throughout. Occasionally, however, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not sufficiently high, so that the pace of the lesson, and of pupils' learning, slows.
- The school has recently introduced more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving activities. This is beginning to increase pupils' enjoyment of mathematics and provide extra challenge for pupils of all abilities, although developments are at an early stage. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoy these opportunities and many tackle the work confidently. For example, pupils in a mixed Year 3 and 4 class had to think hard while playing a 'Think of a Number' game with the teacher. They thoroughly enjoyed the game because it was exciting and tested their knowledge of number.
- Sometimes, pupils find calculation and problem-solving work more difficult because, while the school has a good range of practical resources, these are not always on hand for pupils to select when needed, particularly when pupils are working independently. Teachers occasionally miss opportunities to show pupils how practical resources can be used to complete a calculation or solve a problem.
- The teaching of reading is well established and effective. For example, pupils are regularly taught the link between letters and the sounds they represent, and are grouped flexibly across the school. As a result, learning is accurately matched to pupils' needs and any gaps in knowledge are successfully addressed. There are many opportunities for pupils to apply their reading and writing skills in different subjects so that learning is purposeful and relevant.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- In this small village school, pupils of different ages enjoy each other's company and learn and play together harmoniously. Pupils behave extremely well during playtimes and as they move around the school. They told the inspector that behaviour in the school is very good, and most parents and carers who completed Parent View agree.
- In lessons, most pupils are consistently well behaved and keen to learn. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because occasionally a few pupils find it difficult to maintain concentration during lessons and become fidgety, particularly when the lesson does not move on at a sufficiently rapid pace, so that their learning slows.
- Pupils are justifiably proud of their work and of their school. They are interested in learning and are keen to do well. They are polite and welcome visitors with warmth and enthusiasm.
- Individual pupils who sometimes find it difficult to behave appropriately are effectively supported because adults know all the pupils in the school very well and respond to their needs in a positive and caring manner.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe in school and are confident that any worries will be sorted out by adults. All parents who completed Parent View said that their children feel safe in school. Regular events, such as talks given by the Community Support Officer, mean that pupils know about the different forms that bullying can take and have a sensible view about how they can help to keep themselves safe. Pupils say that incidents of bullying in the school are rare, and this view is supported by school records.
- Attendance is broadly average. The school works closely with parents and carers, and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has been substantially reduced since the last inspection. For example, in the last academic year, no pupils were persistently absent.

The leadership and management

are good

- The headteacher's commitment to the pupils, the staff and the local community has been instrumental in securing the positive school ethos and in successfully driving improvement. She is ably supported by subject leaders, who know what is working well in their subject and how the quality of learning can be further improved. Staff work together extremely well as a team and morale is high, ensuring the school's capacity to make further improvements.
 - The school is strongly committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to achieve, regardless of background or ability, and discrimination, in any form, is not tolerated. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that pupils are given a wide range of experiences to enrich their learning, including opportunities to find out about people with different backgrounds and beliefs. As a result, pupils listen with respect to the views of others and, by Year 6, are able to discuss a range of issues with sensitivity and maturity.
 - Parents and carers express confidence in the school and value the care and attention given to individual pupils and the distinctive small school ethos. This is reflected in one parent's comment that 'Slindon truly recognises that every child comes from their own starting point and works hard to ensure that pupils make progress that is relevant and important to them as individuals.'
 - Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and up to date, including training for staff and governors, and meet statutory requirements.
 - The local authority has provided some helpful support to develop the quality of teaching.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Commitment to improvement, combined with appropriate training, means that the role played by the governing body has developed well since the last inspection. Governors provide good levels of support and challenge for the school. They are well informed about strengths in teaching and about aspects of teaching which need further support and development. Governors understand how well pay is aligned to performance and support further developments in teaching. They know how well the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally including different groups of pupils. Committees regularly discuss how funds such as pupil premium are spent and what difference it is making to pupils' achievement and well-being.
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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	125994
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	406337

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Elkin
Headteacher	Jane Walters
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2010
Telephone number	01243 814330
Fax number	01243 814556
Email address	office@slindon.w-sussex.sch.uk

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