

Southill Primary School

Sycamore Road, Southill, Weymouth, DT4 9UF

Inspection dates 15—16 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress during their time in school, particularly the more-able pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teaching is mostly good and some is outstanding because teachers and very skilled teaching assistants work together well to provide work which is not too hard or too easy.
- There is a very caring atmosphere in the school. Parents say that all the adults know the pupils really well and do everything they can to make sure that they are happy and learn well.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and their behaviour is outstanding. They are exceptionally polite and show respect for each other and for all adults in school.
- Leaders and the governing body know precisely what the school does well and how it needs to improve and they show determined drive and ambition to make it even better. The changes they have made this year have been very effective and there is evidence of this in the improved progress pupils are making.
- The school's curriculum is exciting and pupils really enjoy learning in creative ways.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough excellent teaching in school to make sure that achievement is outstanding.
- Information about how well pupils are doing is not always used quickly enough by leaders to find out if the actions they are taking are helping pupils to make faster progress.
- Teachers do not always tell pupils exactly what they need to do to improve their work and then give them time to put the advice into practice when marking their books.
- Teachers do not check regularly enough whether pupils are reaching their targets in order to give them new targets.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons and parts of lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other leaders in school, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, parents and carers, and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 36 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the views of parents and carers in the playground.
- Information about how school leaders know how good the school is and their plans for making it better, as well as assessment information, minutes of meetings of the governing body, teachers' plans, pupils' work and safeguarding procedures were examined.
- Inspectors analysed 26 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Jeanne Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Hunnings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Southill is an average-sized primary school.
- From April 2011 until September 2012, the headteacher was seconded to another school and the deputy headteacher became acting headteacher.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which is additional funding provided for children in local authority care, children of service families and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average. There are 11 children from service families currently on the school's roll.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - telling pupils, when marking their books, exactly how they can improve their work and then giving them time to put the advice into practice
 - checking more regularly whether pupils are reaching the targets that are set for them and then setting new targets when necessary
 - using the information from assessments about how well pupils are progressing to evaluate whether the extra support pupils are given is helping them to catch up with their peers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start school their skills are below those expected for their age. The supportive and caring atmosphere in the Reception classroom means that their social skills develop well so that they become confident learners and make good progress.
- By the time they enter Year 1 more children than found nationally have achieved the levels of skill expected for their age. They show great enjoyment in their learning because adults give them opportunities to learn in exciting ways. For example, children were engrossed in finding out about birds such as penguins and puffins as part of their efforts in discovering who or what laid the egg that was recently found in a nest in the school's garden.
- In 2012, less than half the pupils in Year 1 reached the expected standards in the phonics screening check, in spite of the additional help that was provided for some pupils. Boys did equally as well as girls and more pupils attained the higher marks than nationally.
- During their time in Key Stage 1, pupils make at least expected progress, though since the last inspection, achievement at the end of Key Stage 1 has dropped off. Leaders are aware of the reasons for this decline and are doing everything they can to make sure that all pupils receive the help they need in order to enable them to make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action reached below average standards but pupils supported at school action plus were above average.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 standards in English were below average, whereas those in mathematics were slightly above. Half the class attained the higher Level 5 in English, which is much higher than average. The progress of all pupils in Key Stage 2 was better than is expected nationally and has improved even more this academic year. The current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach above average standards.
- Leaders, including governors, make sure that all the pupils eligible for pupil premium support are given the help they need to catch up. At the end of Key Stage 2 last year, the attainment and progress of these pupils was broadly the same as their peers and there were no significant gaps.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations and they plan carefully to make sure that the work they set in lessons provides the right level of challenge for pupils of all abilities. The additional challenge they provide for more-able pupils means that these pupils, particularly, make very good progress and achieve very well.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to check on what pupils understand and they adjust their teaching to make sure that all pupils are confident with the new learning before they start to work on their own. Teachers are very good at noticing if pupils get stuck at any point and they are quick to provide support so that no time is lost.
- Teachers consistently share with pupils what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson and the pupils are given chances to think about their learning and to assess for themselves how well they have done.
- Teaching assistants are very skilled and give effective support to pupils of all abilities. They, like the teachers, use questions very well. They give pupils opportunities to work on their own so that the pupils don't become too reliant on always having support, particularly lower ability pupils.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught very well because teachers have good subject knowledge. There are many opportunities for pupils to practise the skills gained in these lessons in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium as well as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given very carefully selected special programmes of support. However,

the recently introduced system for tracking pupils' attainment and progress is not yet being fully used to compare the progress of different groups of pupils as a way of checking that the support is fully effective and is enabling them to catch up with their peers.

- Teachers mark work very carefully and follow the school's highlighting code. This is sometimes explained further through comments at the end of the piece of work, but this is not consistent and teachers do not always give pupils the chance to improve their work based on the advice given.
- Most pupils are aware of their targets, particularly in writing, linked to the standards they are expected to reach by the end of the academic year. These targets are displayed at the front of their books, though pupils report that teachers rarely refer to the targets during lessons and that the targets are not regularly reviewed and changed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, when they are moving around the school and in the playground is excellent. Pupils are consistently polite and show exemplary manners in the way they treat each other and adults. As a result, relationships are harmonious. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and apply themselves very well in lessons.
- Pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour are given sensitive and effective support by teachers and teaching assistants and are helped to develop appropriate ways of thinking about how to behave when they are feeling angry or frustrated. Other pupils in the class ignore any disturbances that occur and carry on with their work sensibly. There are many examples where pupils' behaviour has improved significantly because of the support they have received.
- Staff, governors, pupils and parents and carers all agree that the school is a very safe place. Pupils say that there is no bullying, but that if there was it would be dealt with very swiftly. They also say that the sanctions and rewards are fair. There is no evidence of any form of discrimination.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in all situations they are likely to meet, including when they are on the internet. All these measures contribute to the outstanding culture of care for individuals which was recognised by all parents and carers who responded to Parent View, as well as those spoken to in the playground.
- Attendance is above average and is improving year-on-year because the importance of good attendance is promoted well.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Since the return of the headteacher from secondment this year, the drive for improvement has been reinvigorated and the clear vision which she and the governors share is driving the actions being taken. All staff say that they understand the priorities for improvement and what they are all trying to achieve.
- All leaders, including governors, have a very accurate understanding of what the school does well and where it needs to improve because of regular and accurate reviews of the school's effectiveness.
- Their plans for improvement focus on the right things and they make sure that the planned actions are happening on time. They understand what progress information is telling them about achievement and how the school compares with schools nationally and show real determination to see that the school is as good as it can be.
- Leaders are well aware of the reasons behind the drop in standards at the end of last year. This year they have made a number of very effective changes, including the new system for tracking pupils' progress and attainment.
- Regular meetings take place between class teachers and leaders where the achievement of

pupils who are at risk of falling behind and those who are eligible for pupil premium funding is reviewed and decisions are made about exactly what needs to be done to help them catch up. As a result, all groups of pupils are making greatly improved progress this year showing that the school has capacity for further improvement.

- The quality of teaching is regularly reviewed and the management of performance is very effective in identifying teachers' strengths and areas where they could improve. Teachers have good opportunities to attend training courses, including through close involvement with a group of local schools, which means that good practice can be shared.
- The curriculum is very innovative and pupils really enjoy the creative ways in which they are able to learn. They take on 'the mantle of the expert' and are encouraged to find out about the topic they are studying by undertaking research at whatever level is appropriate to their age.
- This provides them with rich opportunities to apply their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics in meaningful ways. It also contributes effectively to the development of social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding.
- The school has developed a very good link with a school in Kenya and staff have had the opportunity to take part in exchange visits. The 'Rights Respecting' approach, which is secured in the school, also helps pupils' understanding of global justice and their rights and responsibilities as citizens.
- The community holds the school in exceptionally high regard and parents are very complimentary about the relationships that the staff have with both with they themselves and the pupils.
- Arrangements for safeguarding children fully meet requirements.
- The local authority provides appropriate levels of support and challenge and encourages the school to share its many strengths with other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are very knowledgeable about the school, not just from the detailed reports they receive from the headteacher, but from the regular visits they make. Every governor has responsibility for finding out about a particular aspect of the school's work and they are all diligent in meeting with teachers to ask searching questions and then reporting back their findings to the rest of the governing body. The induction of new governors is very strong and all governors regularly undertake training to make sure that they are being as effective as possible. They monitor the way in which all funding is spent, including the pupil premium, and they are fully involved in making strategic decisions about the recruitment of staff to meet the needs of the pupils. Governors are aware of how teachers are rewarded for good performance through progression through the pay scales. They show an excellent balance of challenge and support and know how any underperformance is being tackled. As a result, teaching is rapidly improving.

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	113719
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	412269

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	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Symonds
Headteacher	Wanda Bolton
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
Telephone number	01305 733144
Email address	office@southill.dorset.sch.uk

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