

Southway Junior School

Southway, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9SU

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The overall progress pupils make from different starting points is not good and some learners do not achieve as highly as they should.
- The quality of teaching over time has varied too much. Teachers do not provide activities that challenge pupils to achieve their best, particularly the most able.
- Pupils sit and listen to teachers' explanations for too long, especially at the start of lessons. This slows the pace of learning.
- There are differences in the quality of marking and target setting in mathematics and pupils do not have enough clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Pupils do not make fast enough progress in writing, including those eligible for pupil premium funding. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in a range of different subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- This is a very caring and welcoming school where pupils feel safe, valued and supported.
- The acting senior leadership team, together with the governors, has a clear understanding of what is needed to improve pupils' achievement. Clear systems now exist to assess the progress of pupils accurately.
- Pupils behave well and want to do their best. They have many opportunities to take responsibility and are a credit to the school. Parents are very complimentary and would recommend the school to others.
- Transition arrangements from the infant school are strong.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons of which three were joint observations with the acting headteacher. In addition, inspectors heard some pupils read and scrutinised work in their books. They also visited sessions on phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and guided reading.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders as well as two groups of pupils.
- The Co-Vice-Chair of the Governing Body was interviewed.
- Inspectors took account of the 83 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and a letter from a parent.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation including improvement planning and records of pupils' progress and attainment. Records of how the school uses the pupil premium funding, together with information on attendance, safeguarding and behaviour, were also examined.
- The views of 24 staff who had completed the staff questionnaire were also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Ken Bryan	Additional Inspector
Matthew Klimcke	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is slightly higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average. (Pupil premium is additional funding for children who are eligible for free school meals, looked after children or children from service families.)
- There are privately-run on-site breakfast and after-school clubs, which were not included in this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since Christmas, the school has been run by an acting headteacher and acting assistant headteacher. The governing body has appointed a new headteacher who will take up their role in September.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that teachers provide activities that challenge pupils to achieve their best, particularly the most able
 - making lessons more active, especially by reducing the amount of teacher talk at the start of lessons
 - making sure that teachers use marking and target setting in mathematics consistently well to show pupils how to improve their work.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to write at length in different subjects
 - making sure that those who are eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to their peers in writing
 - improving pupils' presentation in handwriting.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils join the school in Year 3 with attainment that is higher than average. In 2012 by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly in line with national averages in English and mathematics, and therefore achievement requires improvement. This is due to variations in the quality of teaching over time.
- Not enough pupils make good progress in writing, including those who are eligible for the pupil premium. Teachers do not have high enough expectations about the standard of presentation in handwriting. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to build their skills and write at length in other subjects of the curriculum.
- In previous years there has been a significant gap between the English and mathematics attainment of those who are eligible for the pupil premium funding and that of other pupils. The school's current data show that although there is still a gap it is now narrowing. On average, these pupils are now about a term behind their peers in both English and mathematics. The gap is closing due to the effective impact of additional support provided for these pupils.
- The school quickly identifies and puts in place effective support for any pupils who may have regressed a little over the summer break.
- Pupils' progress in reading remains uneven because of variations in the quality of teaching. However, observations of the teaching of phonics and guided reading show that this is improving and teaching assistants provide appropriate support for those who need extra help.
- Mathematics attainment and progress has, in previous years, been higher than the national average, although there was a dip in attainment back to national averages last year. The school's own assessments show that attainment in mathematics is again rising for some pupils, particularly for those who are likely to reach the higher level (Level 5) by the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early, their progress is regularly reviewed and their achievement is similar to that of their peers. They are supported by skilled staff.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, variations in the quality of teaching have resulted in pupils making uneven progress throughout the school. There are also variations in the progress of pupils within year groups. The school now rigorously tracks progress and, as part of their performance management, teachers are given progress targets for the pupils in their class; this is helping to accelerate pupils' progress and much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good.
- Where teaching is weakest, teachers do not provide activities that challenge all pupils to do their best and tasks are sometimes too easy. Often, although the teacher has planned work for the more able, it is not given to them until late in the lesson. There are missed opportunities, therefore, to promote better progress, particularly for the most able.
- During weaker lessons pupils sit and listen to teachers' explanations for too long, especially at the start of lessons. This slows the pace of learning and reduces opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge by working by themselves.
- When marking is of good quality, pupils are given clear guidance about their levels and how well they can improve. However, there is too much variation in the way that mathematics work is marked. Teachers do not consistently show pupils how they can improve their work and move forward in their learning. There is also inconsistency in the use of targets and pupils often have out of date targets which are of little value in helping them to progress.
- Pupils' social and moral development is promoted well in lessons when pupils work cooperatively and support each other, for example when they are working in groups or pairs. Teachers and other adults demonstrate respectful relationships in their dealings with each other and with other

pupils. Assemblies and lessons give pupils good opportunities to consider moral dilemmas, promote empathy and encourage pupils to aim high.

- In the most effective lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge and information on how well pupils are progressing to plan work that matches their needs and abilities. Teachers use a good range of questioning techniques to challenge pupils' understanding, and well-skilled teaching assistants help pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to learn quickly because they remain interested in the activities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils at Southway say they feel safe at school and well looked after by the adults around them. They are proud of their school. As one said, 'I love coming here as it's so friendly.' They have a good understanding of personal safety and the school ensures that they are aware of particular issues, for example being safe on the internet. Parents, carers and staff agree with the positive views of pupils who say that they would recommend the school to others.
- The core values and strong ethos that the school promotes create a good climate for learning. Pupils listen attentively and cooperate well during lessons. Pupils of all abilities want to do their best and talk about their work with pride. The school has asked pupils how they like to learn and pupils have responded with very thoughtful ideas, including that they would like more one-to-one time to discuss their learning at the beginning of the week, which they can then review at the end of the week.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities within the school, such as the school council, eco warriors, youth council, house captains, and peer mediators, and all of these opportunities promote good social development. Moral development is well promoted through the Rights Respecting School initiative, where the school is working towards level 1. All pupils have a mature understanding of the concept of respect for all. Senior staff and governors ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed.
- There is a range of opportunities planned in the curriculum that promote pupils' cultural awareness. The school is part of the International Schools Programme and has a link with a Jamaican school and pupils write to each other describing their respective lives.
- Attendance is above national averages and the school works well to promote good attendance and reduce absence.
- Staff have high expectations of the behaviour of pupils and they manage it well. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and the different forms it can take. They report that it is rare and they know their teachers would deal with any problems.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, over time, the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching have not been consistently good enough.
- The recently in-post acting senior leadership team has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvements and they are working hard to improve both teaching and progress. Their judgements on the quality of the school's work are accurate and detailed and they provide a stable but challenging environment during this interim period. All staff are working well together to bring about improved progress and the school is now in a better position for when the new headteacher takes up their post.
- The local authority is providing a high level of effective support to improve teaching and achievement. This has been greatly appreciated by both senior and middle leaders. Regular visits by various partners, including subject specialists, show the authority is committed to improving the school.
- Regular pupil progress meetings are held to decide how best to boost the progress of individual

pupils. Teaching is regularly observed by senior staff who hold teachers rigorously to account for the progress of their pupils as part of performance management arrangements for staff. Middle leaders are also held responsible for the progress of the pupils in their year groups.

- Good liaison with the infant feeder school ensures a smooth transition.
 - The curriculum is well organised and provides effective opportunities for learning to be engaging, taking into account the interests of pupils. The school enhances the curriculum with visits and planned activities. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils were enthralled with the snakes and other small creatures that were brought into school. Pupils enjoy the various topics, such as Treasure Island in Year 3. Overall, the curriculum provides opportunities that contribute well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Parents and carers have a very positive view of the school and feel that their children are well looked after and learn well.
 - Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. The school is strongly inclusive and there is a firm commitment to equality of opportunity.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide effective support and are fully committed to making the school the best it can be. They have secured the permanent leadership arrangements for the start of the new academic year when the new headteacher will take up post. Governors are well informed and know the school's strengths; they know that further improvement is necessary in teaching and pupils' progress. They have ensured that the performance management of staff has resulted in appropriate rewards for performance. The membership of the governing body has recently been strengthened, bringing additional skills and experience. These new governors are developing their skills in reviewing pupil progress data. Governors have allocated pupil premium funding well and are monitoring the impact on pupils' progress. Governors rigorously monitor the schools finances and check that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
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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	125941
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	406335

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Izard
Headteacher	Michael Dewey (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	November 2010
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