

# Shinewater Primary School

Milfoil Drive, Langney, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 8ED

**Inspection dates** 16–17 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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**

- Too few pupils are reaching the expected levels for their age in reading and writing by the end of Year 6 and not enough pupils achieve the higher levels. While phonics (the sounds letters make) is now systematically taught, it has yet to have a significant impact on reading standards.
- While most pupils make progress that is broadly in line with the national expectation, not enough pupils make better than expected progress, so the gap between the standards they achieve and the national average is not closing quickly.
- Teaching is not consistently good. It is not as strong in Reception or in Years 1 to 4 as it is in other year groups.
- The pace of lessons varies and sometimes introductions go on too long, leaving insufficient time for pupils to complete their independent tasks.
- Pupils are not always given the opportunity to act on the advice given following the marking of their work.
- Checks made on pupils' progress are not rigorous or systematic enough, so that pupils are not always given work that challenges them.
- Only recently have leaders begun to analyse the performance of different groups of pupils, and are just beginning, consequently, to get an accurate idea of the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Action taken by leaders to improve teachers' performance has not been systematic and there has not been sufficient reference to the Teachers' Standards guidance.
- Checks on the impact of spending decisions, such as the pupil premium, are not rigorous enough.
- Governors have not held leaders properly to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Attendance is below average and there is a higher than average amount of persistent absence.

## The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and they feel safe. They are polite, well mannered and respectful.
- The school is a caring place. The nurture classes and groups are particularly effective in encouraging pupils to value school.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning because staff members try hard to make the lessons interesting and fun.
- Progress speeds up towards the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, and especially in Year 6, because teaching is more consistently good.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were joint observations with the acting headteachers.
- The inspection team heard pupils read, attended an assembly and looked closely at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding guidance, minutes of governing body meetings, performance management statements and performance data.
- Meetings were held with a representative group of pupils, staff members, senior leaders and governors. Discussions were held with a representative of the local authority and with the executive headteacher.
- The inspection team took account of the 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents and carers outside school. Attention was also paid to the school's analysis of its own parent and carer questionnaires.
- Inspectors considered 41 staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Richard Potts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Anne Duke	Additional Inspector
Steve Nelson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with parents in the armed services) is above average.
- 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 over twice the national average.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils enters and leaves the school each year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Leadership and management of the school are currently provided by two acting headteachers, supported by an executive headteacher. This arrangement was put in place following the departure of the previous headteacher at Easter 2013. One of the acting headteachers is an experienced former headteacher contracted to the school for the summer term, while the other was formerly the school's deputy headteacher. The executive headteacher, who is a National Leader of Education, is the headteacher of a local secondary school, contracted to Shinewater Primary School pending the appointment of a substantive headteacher. Governors have appointed a new headteacher, who will take up post in September 2013.

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

- Make sure that all teaching matches the quality of the very best in the school by:
  - making better use of assessment information to ensure a closer match between the challenge of work and pupils' learning needs
  - increasing the pace at which pupils are expected to finish their tasks
  - ensuring that pupils understand how to improve their own work and are given the opportunity to do it.
- Raise achievement in reading and writing by:
  - giving pupils more challenging targets for improving their writing and closely checking their progress towards meeting them
  - ensuring that pupils have a better understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and are encouraged to read widely.
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with national averages.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring:
  - leaders evaluate the impact of the pupil premium funding on the achievement of those benefiting from its support
  - leaders develop more rigorous procedures by which to track and analyse the performance of individuals and groups of pupils across the school
  - leaders use the Teachers' Standards and performance management to increase the proportion of good and better teaching in all subjects
  - governors do more to ensure that they have detailed information on the school's effectiveness and hold leaders more rigorously to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In 2012, standards were significantly below average in all subjects by the end of Year 2. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 mean that not all pupils make sufficient progress.
- The large majority of children start Nursery with skills and knowledge that are below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in some aspects of their learning, especially in their personal, social and emotional development, but far less progress in their communication and language skills, so that these early literacy skills are still underdeveloped as children enter Reception. Most Reception-age children make progress at broadly the same rate as children in other schools, but too few make more than expected progress, so that they enter Key Stage 1 at levels that remain below those expected for their age.
- Progress is too uneven across the school. It varies both between year groups and between subject areas. Some pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics, but far less progress in their writing. Rates of progress accelerate in Year 2, but slow again in Key Stage 2 until picking up again sharply in Year 5 and, particularly, in Year 6.
- Standards in mathematics are higher than they are in reading and writing. Standards in Year 6 in 2012 were significantly below average in English and too few pupils achieved the higher levels. The number of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in mathematics was broadly in line with the average, as was the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels.
- The progress made by pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs in 2012 compared well with national averages in English, but not as well in mathematics. Nevertheless, these pupils are generally well supported in groups set up to boost their progress and, as a result, the performance gap is closing.
- The gap in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and others in the school was greater than the national picture in 2012. Pupils were up to four terms behind their classmates in English and over three terms behind in mathematics. The school has used the additional funding to provide additional classroom support in reading, writing and mathematics, and to subsidise some enrichment activities this year. However, the way in which the impact of this spending is checked remains underdeveloped. Nevertheless, there are early indications that these pupils are beginning to make more progress and the gap is closing.
- Pupils who join at other times than normal settle quickly into this welcoming school. Teachers set tasks that build on their knowledge and skills and, as a result, they make progress that is broadly similar to that of the others.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, it has not led to enough pupils making better than expected progress across the school.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly, but this information is not always well used to ensure that tasks are sufficiently challenging for all pupils and build on their prior attainment. As a result, the targets pupils are set are not always sufficiently demanding, especially in writing, and teaching is not always precisely targeted to meet the needs of different pupils, so that their progress is impeded.
- While there is some good and outstanding teaching, there is not enough of it. Pupils' books show that pupils make good progress over time, particularly in Year 6, because these teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. This is not the case in all classes, with expectations being more uneven in Reception and Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4.
- Where teaching is good or better, teachers make their expectations clear, focus on what pupils will learn and conduct lessons at a brisk pace. For example, older pupils were presented with an image of a chocolate bar and asked to suggest mathematical problems that could be created

from it. As a result of skilfully targeted questioning, well-paced delivery, the systematic building on prior knowledge, reference back to previous work, an emphasis on mathematical ideas and language and an incessantly high expectation on the quality and depth of pupils' answers, a more-able group of pupils made good progress. In less effective lessons the main reason why pupils make too little progress is because they sit for too long listening to the teacher and not enough time is given to allow pupils to finish the task.

- Teachers' marking in exercise books is thorough and regular. It shows pupils what they need to do to improve and provides useful encouragement for further learning. Its impact is diminished, however, because pupils are not always given the time and opportunity to correct their mistakes or to practise their skills, so that similar mistakes and misunderstandings are sometimes repeated in subsequent work.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, phonics (the sounds that letters make) teaching is beginning to establish a solid foundation on which to build children's reading skills, although it has yet to have a significant impact on standards.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils with particular learning difficulties and those who find it hard to sustain concentration in class. They make a significant contribution to the caring atmosphere that pervades the school and to pupils' good standards of behaviour. Where they are particularly effective, they explain tasks clearly and ask searching questions to make pupils think more carefully about their work, but they are not always effectively deployed, and in some lessons have limited opportunities to promote better progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Trusting, positive relationships are a hallmark of the school. Pupils value those around them and treat adults and each other with courtesy and respect. They behave well in class, even when teaching is less than good and the tasks they are given are too easy for them.
- The school has well-developed and effective systems of rewards and sanctions. Carefully maintained logs indicate that poor behaviour and racist incidents are very rare. Repeated indiscipline is dealt with swiftly and robustly.
- Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy the interesting topics which teachers introduce to them. They work well together when asked to discuss their work or complete a shared task.
- Disabled pupils and those whose special educational needs have an impact on the way they behave are well supported by teaching and support staff and expectations of them are no different to any of the others.
- Pupils say that bullying is not a problem and they are confident that any issues will be dealt with promptly by staff members. They know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and what to do to combat them.
- They say that the school is a safe and caring place and this is confirmed by parents. A large majority of the parents say their children are happy in school and that they are well looked after.
- Older pupils are ready volunteers for extra tasks and responsibilities. They take their roles seriously, for example in looking after the younger pupils and organising activities during break times.
- The school works well with parents to improve pupils' behaviour over time. Close partnership with other support agencies, providing help for parents, adds to the effectiveness of the school's work.
- Due to well-targeted action, attendance is improving and fewer pupils are persistently absent than previously, although attendance still remains lower than the national expectation.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Only recently have leaders begun to refine systems and procedures that accurately and rigorously check on teaching and learning and the effectiveness of the curriculum, for example

by the use of data and guidance such as that contained in the Teachers' Standards. The rigour with which they are now making their judgements is demonstrating that an over-generous view had been taken on how well the school was doing.

- While tracking systems are helping leaders and teachers to see how individual pupils are doing, they have been less effective in giving them a clear overview of how groups of pupils are progressing over time. Because of this, it has proved difficult to measure the impact of approaches to improve teaching and achievement. For example, the school has yet to develop a systematic approach to evaluating the impact of its pupil premium spending.
- While targets are set for teachers to improve their practice, performance management has not systematically linked individual targets to the school's overall improvement priorities. As a result, performance management has had limited impact in underpinning better outcomes for all pupils.
- The acting headteachers, well supported by the executive headteacher, have a clear vision for the school and have made a good start in drawing up strategies to address pupils' underperformance. Building on the existing foundation of successful pastoral support for pupils, they have introduced useful strategies to enhance the quality of teaching and to promote better attendance, both of which are beginning to improve.
- Teaching programmes are rich and varied, with plenty of visits, residential trips, visitors and clubs. Pupils receive a good range of experiences in sport, the arts and music. Topics are relevant and designed to appeal. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed their 'pirate day', celebrating the maritime heritage of the area. These activities contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While teachers' explanations are often enlivened by the effective use of technology, opportunities for pupils' independent, computer-based research are not always taken.
- While the school is committed to equality of opportunity and makes sure that discrimination is not tolerated, pupils do not always have the same high quality educational experiences because of inconsistencies in teaching between classes.
- The local authority accepts that its light-touch approach has, in part, contributed to the perpetuation of an over-optimistic view of the school's effectiveness. More recently, its brokerage of a National Leader of Education to act as executive headteacher has proved appropriate.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are very supportive of the school and committed to its improvement, but have not had the information they need to be in a strong position to challenge it about inconsistencies in the quality of teaching or pupils' achievement. As a result, they have developed an over-optimistic view of the school's effectiveness. They know how the pupil premium is spent, but are less clear about its impact for eligible pupils. Governors understand how the school rewards good teaching and tackles underperformance, but are less well informed about the management of teachers' performance and why it has had only limited impact on better outcomes for pupils. Governors make sure that statutory requirements are met, particularly those relating to safeguarding.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114476
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	411912
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	413
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Weller
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anna Reid and Euleen Rendle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June–1 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01323 762129
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