

Steyning CofE Primary School

Shooting Field, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3RQ

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. It has improved significantly since 2012 and the most recent national test results show that it has improved for all groups of pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in classrooms and in the special support centre make good progress, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching is typically good and often outstanding. As a result, almost all pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in almost all classes is good. The great majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their lessons. They flourish well in the school's strong Christian ethos.
- Senior leaders and governors have driven necessary improvements with vigour and commitment over the past year. Their work is having the desired impact and has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Some teaching requires improvement in order to raise achievement even further.
- Ensure that younger pupils understand the dangers of internet use.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons and part lessons, of which one was observed jointly with the headteacher and four with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors talked with pupils, looked at samples of their work and listened to two groups of pupils read.
- Meetings were also held with teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, the former Chair of the Governing body and the present vice chair, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the visiting school counsellor and the school’s middle leaders. Telephone conversations were held with the school’s improvement adviser and with a representative of the local authority to discuss the extent and impact of support provided to the school.
- In planning the inspection, the inspectors took account of the 90 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the views of nine parents and carers who spoke with them during the inspection, a letter received from a parent or carer, and 39 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at many documents including minutes of governing body meetings, the school’s checks on how well it is doing, the school’s development plan, performance management documentation, planning documents, monitoring and assessment information, school policies, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

John Collins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sandra Teacher

Additional Inspector

Susan Hunnings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an above average-sized primary school and has a specialist speech and language centre (Special Support Centre), currently providing education for eight pupils.
- Pupils are taught in single-aged classes throughout the school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- Almost all pupils speak English as their home language; the proportion that has English as an additional language is very much smaller than the national average.
- A relatively high number of pupils join the school part-way through their primary education.
- Fewer than one in 10 pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families; this is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. At school action plus and for statements of special educational needs it is well above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been significant changes to the governing body and the middle management in the past year. There is a new Chair of the Governing Body, seven new governors, a new special educational needs coordinator, and new Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 mathematics coordinators.
- The school has been awarded Eco School Silver status, the Healthy Schools award and the Artsmark Gold award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all teaching is good or better by:
 - making regular use of individual pupils' assessment information to ensure lesson planning takes account of pupils' individual needs
 - ensuring that written feedback to pupils, particularly in mathematics, helps them to understand what they must do to improve their work
 - insisting pupils present their work well and encouraging them to take pride in it
 - ensuring that spelling, punctuation and calculation are always corrected when necessary.
- Ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good understanding of the dangers of internet use and check they use it safely.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Data collected by the school support the view of most parents and carers that the current achievement of pupils in all year groups, including those that arrived part-way through their primary education, has improved significantly and is now at or above age-related expectations. Lesson observations, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read confirm that most current pupils are making good progress from their starting points. Consequently achievement is good.
- In Years 3 to 6, the great majority of pupils build well on their earlier achievements. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is generally well above national averages in reading and writing, and broadly in line with the national average in mathematics. More-able pupils do particularly well and far exceeded national averages at the highest levels in the summer 2013 national tests.
- External end-of-Year 6 test raw results also support this positive picture although not at first sight. Results dipped in 2011 and 2012. There were two principal reasons for this. These cohorts contained unusually high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and those who joined part-way with through Key Stage 2 with low prior attainment. Second, teacher absence and some temporary weaknesses in teaching led to some disruption for some pupils' learning; these issues have now been rectified.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, sometimes starting from well below expected levels, make excellent progress towards the early goals for learning. This is because of outstanding provision through which children gain a wide range of learning experiences.
- For example, working outdoors, one group of children sweeping a puddle of rainwater found the harder they swept the further the water went. Another group learned that the steeper the angle of the drainpipe the faster their boats went down.
- As a result of their earlier good progress, most pupils leave the Reception class at the level typical for their age. Most children, including those in receipt of pupil premium or who have special educational needs, make strong progress through Years 1 and 2. As a result their achievements in reading, writing and mathematics at age seven are above national averages.
- At the end of Year 6 in the 2012 national tests and assessment, pupils supported by the pupil premium were more than a year behind classmates in both English and mathematics. In 2013, eligible pupils were about a term behind other pupils in both English and mathematics, and school records indicate the gap is continuing to close rapidly. This is because of the high-quality support they receive from teachers and the revised intervention programmes provided by the school.
- Pupils who join the school part-way through their primary education are well supported in their studies but achieve slightly less well than those who started in Year 1. This is mostly because they have special educational needs or have had lack of continuity in their education. For those who join late there is sometimes insufficient time to make up for all gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in classrooms, and in the special support centre, is good in almost all subjects, particularly in Years 1 and 2. This too is mostly because of the high-quality teaching and support they receive.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school is typically good and often outstanding.
- Teaching has been a focus for improvement and the results are clear to see in most lessons. As a result, almost all pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and make good progress. This supports the view of the great majority of parents and carers.
- Some teaching is inspirational and sets very high expectations for pupils to attain. For example,

in a Year 6 mathematics lesson closely linked to the history of Tudor England, pupils of all abilities were using measurements and calculations to design a palace; for example, calculating perimeters and areas of rooms. More-able pupils were using an internet website, suggested by their teacher, to find out how to calculate the distance around a circle so they could include an ornamental fountain.

- However, in a few mathematics lessons teachers' written feedback to pupils did not point out miscalculations or offer advice to help pupils improve their work.
- Emphasis has been given to the teaching of reading and this has significantly improved pupils' enjoyment and achievement. Pupils in all year groups are well taught the 'sounding out' of words (phonics) they find difficult to read.
- Inviting professional authors to explain to pupils how they set about writing stories has enhanced the teaching of writing; this has led to some very good written articles by pupils, for example, in describing the features of a church in Year 2, and in using relevant newspaper quotes in persuasive writing for a newspaper article in Year 6.
- However, in many classes, insufficient attention is given to the correction of misspellings and punctuation.
- All teachers are aware of the importance of ensuring that pupils eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not fall behind. Most plan lessons to ensure good progress and their efforts in this respect have resulted in narrowing the gap between them and other pupils.
- However, a minority of teachers do not make effective use of information about the progress of individual pupils when planning lessons. This restricts the progress of those pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school and enjoy their lessons. As a result the vast majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well, both in lessons and around the school. The great majority of parents and carers responding online to the Parent View survey and to the school's own survey agree.
- From an early age, almost all pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. This is evident in their conversations and in the way they behave towards each other. For example, a child in Reception was heard to say to another, 'It is her turn now, not mine.'
- Their interest, concern and work on environmental matters have led to the Eco School Silver award. In a similar manner, they are conscious of the need to live healthy lifestyles, which is recognised in the Healthy Schools award.
- In lessons, pupils engage willingly in discussion with each other and work well collaboratively and independently. Their conversations are mostly fluent, confident and show respect for the views and beliefs of others in accordance with the school's values.
- Inspectors found pupils to be courteous and generally helpful and well mannered. Governors, many of whom visit the school regularly, and parents and carers confirm this is typically the case.
- The school provides a safe learning environment and pupils say that there are very few cases of bullying, and that any kind of bullying is dealt with immediately and effectively by teachers. Older pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of how to keep safe, for example, in road safety and e-safety. However, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have no understanding of safe use of the internet; this must be rectified.
- Pupils are tolerant of the differences in others and know that if they are worried they can talk with an adult in the school. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Attendance has slightly declined but is currently in line with the national average overall. However, this masks relatively low attendance by some pupils with special educational needs. Attendance for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is broadly in line with national averages.

Punctuality to school and to lessons is generally good.

- There have been no permanent exclusions over the past three years and improved school monitoring and support have resulted in fixed-term exclusions being below national averages.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's senior leaders and governors are committed to continuous school improvement. They have successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection and re-established a good quality of education and achievement following the dips in 2011 and 2012. This includes dealing effectively with temporary staffing difficulties. Given its track record, the school is well placed to improve further.
- Their evaluation of how well the school is doing is accurate and makes clear where its strengths and weaknesses lie. Planning for further improvements is correctly focused on improving the achievement of all pupils, and the measures taken have the full support of governors.
- Following the dip in the 2012 national test results, the school received strong and effective support from the school improvement adviser, and to a lesser extent from the local authority. The resulting improvements led to the local authority now providing appropriately light-touch support.
- Teaching in particular has improved because the senior leaders and governors, helped by the local authority and an external consultant, focused effectively on improving it following a performance review. As a result pupils' achievement has also improved.
- The checks on teaching and learning are systematic and accurate. As a result, performance management is effective and is closely linked to professional development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of staff and school.
- Governors have given impetus to improvements in learning by, for example, releasing funds to equip some classrooms with laptop computers, and to provide further training for teachers and middle managers. The outcomes have been effective in improving the accountability of middle managers, increasing pupils' motivation to learn, and in marked improvement in pupils' reading and research skills.
- The curriculum motivates and inspires pupils and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It provides a rich and exciting programme of opportunities for pupils to learn. This happens not only through the subjects taught but also through educational visits, clubs and contributions from distinguished visitors. It includes regular introductory lessons in French, German, Spanish and Japanese by specialist teachers from the nearby comprehensive school.
- Under the guidance of an artist in residence, there are wonderful displays of pupils' work and stimulating posters providing learning opportunities on corridor and classroom walls. The award of the Gold Artsmark celebrates this.

■ The governance of the school:

- Most governors have had regular training for their role and understand how pupils' performance compares with that in similar schools nationally. Hence, they are able to provide both support and challenge to the school's senior leaders and hold them to account. They are very active in the life and work of the school through regular visits and participating in school activities. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses and this enables them to take an active role in helping the senior team to write and implement policies and the school's improvement plan.
- Governors give strong emphasis to safeguarding. They have made clear that bullying must not be tolerated and that equal opportunities are to be promoted. They know how and why pupil premium funding is being used and how it improves the progress of eligible children. For example, they approved the use of funds to pay for one-to-one tuition for slower readers and to help children who arrived part-way through the year to catch up. They know about the quality of teaching and use safe recruitment procedures. They take a real interest in teachers'

professional development and records show that good teachers are enabled to move up the pay scales. However, governors do not support unjustified promotions or salary increases. They have appropriate plans for the use of funding for sports activities, when funds arrive, and ensure sport is an important part of the children's activities. Their financial competence is reflected in the school's Financial Management Standards in Schools Award (FMSSA). The governing body meets all its statutory requirements.

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	125996
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	424612

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	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Herson
Headteacher	Chris Luckin
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 June 2009
Telephone number	01903 813420
Fax number	01903 816452
Email address	office@steyningprimary.w-sussex.sch.uk

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