

# Southbourne Infant School

New Road, Southbourne, West Sussex, PO10 8JX

**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- Teaching is typically good and has improved since the last inspection. Very positive relationships with pupils ensure that they want to please their teachers and are eager to do well.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school including in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in writing and mathematics and most significantly in reading standards.
- The range of subjects is carefully focused on pupils' needs, and provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite and friendly, enjoy school and feel safe.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher and the deputy headteacher has ensured that the good quality of teaching and pupils' standards has been sustained and continues to improve.
- Since the last inspection senior staff have involved subject leaders more in the monitoring, evaluation and improvements in the school's performance strengthening the school's capacity for further improvement.
- The governing body provides challenge and support to the school. Governors are knowledgeable and understand their responsibilities well, and successfully fulfil their role in holding senior leaders to account for the school's performance. This has made sure that the school continues to flourish.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching in order to drive pupils' progress even faster so that their achievement is outstanding.
- In a few lessons some pupils, particularly the most able are not sufficiently challenged to ensure that they make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop and apply the use of their basic mathematical skills to solve problems.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by eight teachers and four teaching assistants and one assembly. A large proportion of lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- In addition, the inspection team made shorter visits to lessons and provision for pupils learning outside the classroom as well as some supported within, to focus on specific aspects.
- Inspectors heard individual pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, three members of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle leaders. In addition the lead inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, one letter received from a parent, and 21 parents bringing their children to school were also spoken to.
- The views expressed by 10 staff who returned a questionnaire were also considered.
- They observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to the school's performance, self-evaluation, planning, monitoring, the sports funding action plan and safeguarding were also looked at.

## Inspection team

Wendy Forbes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carolyn Steer

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Southbourne is smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This provides additional government funding based on the number of children looked after by the local authority, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals. In this school there are pupils from the last two categories.
- The percentages of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- No pupils are educated in alternative provision away from the school site.
- There have been a small number of staff changes, and a range of new appointments since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher and the short-term planned absence of the Early Years leader currently being covered by a temporary appointment.
- There have also been a number of changes in the governing body since the last inspection, including most recently the appointment of a new Chair of the Governing Body.
- Since its last inspection the school has received an interim assessment of its performance in January 2012.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that all pupils make rapid progress, by:
  - accelerating the rate at which pupils learn by always providing an effective level of challenge to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the most able
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their basic mathematical skills in order to solve problems.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Due to consistently good teaching pupils make good progress throughout the school. Most parents agree their children progress well. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is consistently above the national average, most significantly in reading, and has continued to rise since the last inspection. Progress seen in books and school information show this positive trend in achievement is set to continue. However, achievement is not yet outstanding because there is not enough outstanding teaching in order for pupils, especially the most able, to make rapid progress in their learning.
- In mathematics, staff have worked effectively since the last inspection successfully improving mental calculation skills. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to extend their basic mathematical skills to solve real-life problems. As a result, they make slower progress in mathematics than in reading and writing.
- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge broadly in line with what is expected for their age, often higher in communication and language skills. Children progress well because teaching in Reception classes is good. Adults know children well and go out of their way to ensure they settle quickly into school life, feel safe and enjoy learning.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading because of the significant focus on developing literacy skills and strengthened teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) as well as support given to pupils who find reading difficult. The recent reorganisation of, and continued investment in, reading books supports the continual drive to sustain high standards in reading.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide extra help on a one-to-one basis for individual pupils or in small groups. The attainment of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than that of their peers in the school, but because of the additional support the attainment gap between these groups of pupils and their classmates is narrowing rapidly.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress at similar rates to their peers; the result of effective one-to-one, small group sessions and well-matched support in class.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Consistently good teaching, maintained since the last inspection, continues to strengthen so pupils' attainment continues to rise.
- Most teachers make sure pupils know what they are going to learn so they tackle tasks confidently and enthusiastically. Teachers make learning interesting, use a good range of resources and set work to match most pupils' ability.
- High expectations and effective questioning encourage pupils to think carefully about their learning. As seen, in a Year 2 lesson based on an African story, skilful questioning and modeling of sentence 'openers' helped pupils understand how to improve their writing. Pupils worked enthusiastically, constantly re-evaluating and improving their writing at a rapid rate throughout the lesson.
- Pupils are encouraged to work in pairs and small groups so they can talk about their learning and share ideas promoting good speaking and listening skills.
- Marking systems have improved since the last inspection. The easily remembered 'Pink think, great green and I'm blue without you' strategy helps pupils understand how they are doing. Regular assessments take place to level pupils' work and set improvement targets. Pupils understand the school's simple 'Star target' sheet, where each coloured-in star indicates the progress made towards achieving a goal, for example remembering full stops and capital letters.
- Learning environments are well resourced. They support pupils' development well, for instance in the use of computer activities to reinforce learning in numeracy and literacy, and display

words that help pupils to progress in their reading and writing.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage a wide range of opportunities help children to learn through play and investigation, both inside and outside the classroom. Children enjoy a good balance of activities they can select for themselves and those directed by adults. This promotes children's confidence and their ability to work on their own.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well so they progress well. Other adults provide effective support for small groups in most classes. They use a range of resources and thoughtfully question pupils to promote good progress. Sometimes, in whole-class sessions, additional adults are not used as effectively as they might be.
- However, teaching is not outstanding overall, because on a few occasions some activities do not challenge pupils enough, particularly the most able, when developing mathematical skills to solve problems.
- The school's 'Forest School' programme makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities to experience woodcraft activities, such as building and lighting fires, making an obstacle course and wood-turning, all help pupils to learn about the environment and build confidence. As one pupil, clutching a cup of hot chocolate around a campfire said, 'it's just the best thing ever. We learn masses from being in our forest.'

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

- The school is a caring and orderly community where all pupils are included in everything the school has to offer. Pupils are well behaved, generally polite and well mannered.
- They are keen to learn, and say that lessons are hardly ever disrupted by poor behaviour. School records and discussions with parents, staff, governors and pupils show that behaviour is typically good.
- Staff and pupils share good relationships that support pupils' positive attitudes and enjoyment in learning. The Forest School programme provides many opportunities for pupils to develop positive self-esteem, good attitudes to learning and positive relationships through team-building exercises and opportunities to reflect on personal strengths. These all contribute to their very positive behaviour. As one pupil said 'I like it here, we follow the 'Rainbow' (school's aims and values) to make sure we do our best.'
- Pupils feel safe in school, understand the importance of e-safety, promoted well by the school, and are confident that any instances of poor behaviour, including bullying which is rare, will be dealt with appropriately by adults in school. They are aware of the different forms in which bullying can take place.
- There is a strong focus on ensuring equal opportunities throughout the school. There is no discrimination.
- Although attendance is broadly in line with the national average, the school works hard with families to reduce absence, and has rigorous systems in place to follow-up absences.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because, very occasionally when the pace or challenge of a lesson slows, a few pupils become fidgety and start to chat among themselves.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The determined leadership of the headteacher, very well supported by the deputy headteacher, promotes a clear vision for improvement which is shared by staff who feel valued and supported. The results of the staff questionnaire show morale is high. This strong partnership has moved the school forward in a relatively short space of time.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement plan priorities are closely linked to improving teaching and pupils' achievement, both of which have strengthened; indications of a better capacity for improvement than at the last inspection.

- The effectiveness and impact of middle leaders have improved. Opportunities to lead staff training, monitor pupils' progress and to work alongside experienced colleagues have strengthened their leadership and contributed significantly to improvements in pupils' reading and writing and in calculation skills.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because there is not enough outstanding teaching and achievement in mathematics is not as strong as in reading and writing.
- The school has improved its tracking of pupils' progress. Combined with regular scrutiny and moderation of pupils' work, senior leaders have an accurate picture of progress. Discussions are regularly held with teachers to agree the best strategies for pupils who are making slower progress.
- Teaching is monitored well by leaders. Performance management is robust and clearly linked to further improving teaching and raising pupils' attainment. There are secure links between teachers' performance and their pay progression. Training, linked to the school improvement plan and performance management objectives, is regularly provided for all staff.
- Different subjects are taught through topics and enriched through: the on-site Forest School; drama to enhance projects such as 'The Jolly Postman' and 'Titanic'; and visits out of school, for example to the Planetarium as part of a science topic.
- The school is currently planning to use sports funding to improve staff skills by working alongside specialists in sports, enhance provision and increase pupils' participation in sport.
- Safeguarding of pupils is a priority for the school. Meticulous pre-employment checks ensure that statutory requirements are met well.
- The local authority has given light-touch support to the school and is supported by it. Senior leaders contribute to locality and local authority meetings as well as leading training at a nearby university. Local schools benefit from leaders' strengths of practice.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is a challenging and supportive friend to the school. Well-informed governors know their responsibilities well, and successfully fulfil their role in holding senior leaders to account for the school's performance. Governors are aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and understand how performance compares to that of other schools nationally because they have a clear understanding of data on pupils' achievement. Governors attend appropriate training provided by the local authority. They are regular visitors to the school and understand how pupil premium and sports funding is being used and the impact of this on pupils' progress. They have an overview of the quality of teaching and understand the links between teachers' performance and pay progression, setting challenging targets for the headteacher, staff and pupils. Finances are secure and safeguarding requirements are met.

## 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>	125875
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	463320

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	170
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clare Mann
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Partridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 September 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01243 372727
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