

# Albourne C of E Primary School

The Street, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 9DH

**Inspection dates** 23–24 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The attainment of pupils in 2013 was in line with that of similar pupils nationally. The progress pupils made in reading, by the end of Year 6, was much less than the national average.
- The most able pupils in the school are not given hard enough work, especially in mathematics. As a result, they do not achieve the higher levels in national tests.
- Marking is not consistent across the school. Pupils do not know how to improve their work. Consequently, their progress is limited.
- The activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not promote children's curiosity or challenge their thinking. As a result, children do not make good progress. The learning environment is not enticing.
- Teachers do not always check how well pupils are doing in lessons. They are not all secure in their understanding of how to measure pupils' progress or when to move pupils on to harder work. As a result, the progress pupils make is not rapid.
- Subject leaders are not involved in checking how much progress pupils make in their subjects. They do not work sufficiently with other teachers in the school to raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Governors do not challenge the senior leaders rigorously. They do not hold the school sufficiently to account for the progress of pupils or the quality of teaching.
- Where teaching does not capture the interest of the pupils, they do not pay attention. Not all pupils have good attitudes to learning and this inhibits their progress. Presentation in books is often untidy.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. Their parents agree. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in school and beyond the school gates.
- The headteacher has a clear ambition for the school and its pupils. Her relentless drive has already brought about improvements in the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2014.
- Relationships between the pupils and adults in the school are warm and caring. Parents value the availability of the school staff at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Attendance and punctuality are improving because of the decisive actions of the headteacher.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in classrooms on 11 separate occasions. Four of these were with the headteacher.
- The work in pupils' books was looked at in detail.
- A group of pupils from Year 2 were heard reading.
- The school's documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, checks on the performance of teachers and the progress of pupils, as well as the school's plans for improvement, were all examined by the inspection team.
- Pupils were observed at playtime and at lunchtime. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, a representative of the local authority, other members of the school staff and several governors.
- The inspection team took account of the 45 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire), two letters from parents, 16 responses to the school's own questionnaire and the 11 returned questionnaires from staff. Parents were spoken to informally at the beginning of the school day.

## Inspection team

Jill Thewlis, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Albourne is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. There is one class for each year group.
- Since September 2013 a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator have been appointed.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups is below that found nationally. Fewer pupils than nationally speak English as an additional language.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils who receive support from pupil premium, the additional funding provided by the government to support pupils eligible for free school meals or in local authority care, is well below the national average.
- Seven per cent of pupils are supported at school action, which is below the national average. Four per cent are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, which is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is no nursery provision. All pupils in the Reception class attend full time.

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

- Improve the standard of teaching in order to raise achievement for all pupils, and especially the most able, by:
  - ensuring that all teachers follow the marking policy so that all pupils know how to improve their work
  - making sure that teachers understand how to measure pupils' progress and when pupils are ready to move on to harder work
  - providing activities which challenge the thinking of the most able pupils, particularly in mathematics, and ensuring that they are moved on to more difficult work more rapidly.
- Improve the attitudes of pupils in lessons by:
  - ensuring that activities are interesting and engaging so that pupils are enthusiastic about their learning
  - making sure that pupils present the work in their books neatly so that they can be proud of what they have achieved.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - making sure the leaders of English and mathematics are involved in checking the progress of pupils in their subjects and that they work with other teachers to raise standards in English and mathematics
  - consolidating the recent improvements made by leaders so that teaching, achievement and behaviour for learning improve across the school
  - ensuring that all governors have the necessary skills to hold the leadership to account for the progress of the pupils within the school.

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

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because teaching, achievement and behaviour are not consistently good across the school.
- Not all teachers fully understand when pupils are ready to move on to harder work. They are not clear about how to measure the progress of the pupils in their class. This means that progress, especially for the most able, is not rapid.
- The school's plan for improvement does not have clear milestones for success. It is difficult for senior leaders and governors to demonstrate when actions have been successful. Senior leaders have correctly identified the areas which need to be improved and they are realistic in their view of the school's performance.
- The leaders of English and mathematics are not fully involved in checking the progress of pupils in their subjects. They do not work sufficiently with colleagues in the school to raise standards in their subjects. However, where actions have been taken by the English leader to raise standards in reading, they have been successful. In the 2014 national tests, pupils were more successful than pupils nationally in reading. The leader for mathematics has not improved the attainment of the most able pupils in her subject. There is less progress in mathematics across the school than in reading or writing.
- The headteacher makes regular checks on the performance of all teachers. Where teaching is not good, the headteacher ensures that support is put in place. Following the support the headteacher re-checks performance. All teachers, including the headteacher, have targets for improvement. There is a clear link between performance and pay which is understood by staff.
- The new coordinator for special educational needs has re-organised the support these pupils receive. There are new systems for checking their progress to make sure the support is effective. It is too early to assess the impact of these new arrangements.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced more rigorous processes for measuring the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. As yet, they are too new for any impact to be apparent.
- The majority of the school is well kept. Classrooms are bright and cheerful, with examples of pupils' work attractively displayed. The Year 6 classroom is a shining example. The learning environment in the classroom of the youngest pupils is not of the same quality.
- Primary sport funding is well used. The school has links with local sports clubs and encourages these clubs to come into school. As a result, the numbers of pupils taking up sport outside of school is increasing. A wide range of after-school clubs are provided. Pupils have more opportunities to take part in competitive sport. Teachers receive training in the teaching of physical education and this means pupils benefit from better-quality lessons.
- The new national curriculum is fully in place. Subjects are taught through themes which link different subjects together. A particularly good example was the Year 6 topic centred on the Second World War. In English, pupils wrote diaries and letters. In addition to the historical aspects, pupils also developed their geographical knowledge by locating the different countries involved on maps. Learning is enhanced by a number of trips out and visitors into school, for example an 'evacuee day'.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is sound. Spirituality is fostered through the forest school and the wildlife garden as well as in the well-planned assemblies. The school has recently become a UNICEF rights-respecting school. There are good links with the church, where all major Christian festivals are celebrated. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility by becoming school councillors and sports leaders. Parents of different ethnicities and faiths are encouraged into the school to talk about their culture, thus helping pupils to understand the diversity of life in modern Britain. The school is linked to a school in India. Reciprocal visits have taken place between members of staff, giving pupils the opportunity of working with teachers from other countries.
- There is no evidence of any discrimination. All pupils are treated equally and have equal opportunities to join in activities. However, the variability in the provision across the school means that, at present, they do not all have equal opportunities to succeed.
- Parents are happy with the school. Some comment that things have improved since the new headteacher came to the school. There are only two formal parent-teacher consultation evenings per year but there are many informal opportunities for parents to meet with teachers. Every fortnight parents of children in reception class are invited into the school to see work in classrooms.
- Soon after her appointment, the headteacher secured additional support from the local authority because she felt the school was at risk of failure. The local authority has responded well and has provided good support which has enabled the headteacher to raise the standard of teaching. The local authority is also

providing training for teachers in helping them to accurately measure the progress of pupils.

- The finances of the school are sound.
- The impact of actions taken by the current school leaders, although not yet fully impacting on standards across the school, demonstrates that they have the capacity to secure further improvement.
- All safeguarding requirements are met. Pupils and their parents are confident that safety is good.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors ensure that the school's finances are well managed and they receive regular reports. They have a good understanding of the link between teachers' performance and pay and undertake to manage the performance of the headteacher alongside an external advisor. Not all governors are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Statutory requirements are met. Governors have some knowledge of how pupil premium and primary sport funding are spent, but are not clear about the impact the funding has on the progress of the pupils. The ability of the governors to ask challenging questions of the headteacher is being developed. A skills audit has been very recently completed.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because, in too many lessons, pupils are disengaged.
- Pupils do not always have positive attitudes to learning because teaching does not always stimulate and interest them.
- The presentation of work is often untidy. Pupils in some classes do not have pride in their work. However, in Year 6, work is very well presented because the teacher has high expectations.
- Senior leaders say that behaviour is improving. Examination of the school's records support this view. Parents say that behaviour is good.
- On the playground, pupils have a range of equipment to play with. There is adequate supervision but the adults do not engage in games with the pupils. As a result, some pupils are too boisterous. Adults do not encourage pupils who appear to be alone to join in with games and develop friendships.
- Attendance and punctuality are improving because the headteacher has taken swift action to ensure that attendance rises. There is a zero-tolerance policy for holidays in school time. The school works well with parents and with other professionals so that parents understand why attendance is important for the progress pupils make. For example, the headteacher adds up hours of school missed over a term due to lateness and writes to parents.
- The relationships between all members of the school community are good. Pupils are happy in school. School uniform is worn by all pupils.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils understand the nature of bullying in all its forms. They know how to keep themselves safe. School records show there are few instances of bullying.
- All safeguarding requirements are met. Pupils feel safe and their parents are confident that their children are safe in school.
- There is a secure entry system and all visitors to the school are checked. The school site is, therefore, safe.
- Pupils know they can talk to teachers about any problems they have on the playground.

### The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils, especially the most able, are not making rapid progress. Pupils say they do not work as hard as they could.
- In lessons, teachers do not check on the progress pupils are making often enough and this means that pupils are not quickly moved on to more challenging work. For example, in a mathematics lesson pupils were sharing numbers; the most able understood this but were not immediately moved on to more challenging work.
- Not all teachers plan activities which are suitable for the abilities of the pupils in their classes. In some classes the work is too easy or too hard. Some teachers do not have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils are not encouraged to think for themselves because they are not asked challenging questions. As a result, their understanding is not deepened and progress is limited.

- Marking is inconsistent across the school. There are some good examples of marking in some classes and in some subjects. Pupils are not always given sufficient time to respond to any marking by making corrections to their work. Sometimes, pupils make flippant responses to the comments teachers make. As a result, marking does not have a positive impact on the progress of pupils.
- The themed approach which links different subjects together through a common topic provides pupils with opportunities to write for different purposes. This was especially strong in Year 6, where progress was good. In other classes, pupils do not make good progress because teachers do not have high expectations. In some classes, teachers do not have a good knowledge of some subjects and this inhibits the progress of pupils.
- Pupils enjoy reading and say it helps you to find out more things. Actions taken since 2013 have improved the outcomes at the end of Year 6 in 2014. Pupils can talk about the books they like and explain their reasons. Younger pupils are able to apply their phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make) skills to read unfamiliar words. Pupils read regularly both at home and at school.
- The teaching of phonics is systematic and thorough. As a result, pupils taking the phonics screening check achieve similar standards to other pupils nationally.
- The individual support provided by teaching assistants to pupils with special educational needs is good. Other support given by teaching assistants is variable, with some giving pupil's answers too quickly. Pupils are not given enough time to think, and this impedes their progress.
- The support given to disadvantaged pupils has been variable across the school. This support has been changed since September of this year but it is too early to judge how successful this change has been.
- The use of practical resources in mathematics, especially in Key Stage 1, is good. Pupils have access to a wide range of resources. They are able to choose their own equipment and this helps to reinforce the ideas being taught.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make rapid progress, especially in mathematics.
- At the end of 2013, in national tests, attainment in reading and writing was in line with national averages but attainment in mathematics was below that found nationally. Progress in reading was well below the national average but progress in writing was broadly in line. The proportions making good progress in mathematics were well below the national average.
- In 2014, there has been improvement. Attainment in reading and writing is above the national average. The number attaining Level 4 in mathematics is above the national average but that reaching Level 5 is below the average nationally.
- At the end of 2013, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was above the national average in reading and writing. Reading at Level 3 was significantly above the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels in mathematics was below the national average. In 2014, attainment in all subjects at the expected Level 2 improved on 2013. The proportions attaining the higher Level 3 in all subjects declined in 2014.
- Pupils taking the phonics screening check in 2013 achieved broadly in line with the national average, but those re-taking it in Year 2 were below the national average. In 2014, the numbers achieving the required standard in both Year 1 and Year 2 have increased. This is due to the systematic teaching of phonics across Key Stage 1.
- The most able pupils in 2013 did not make as much progress as pupils of similar ability nationally in any subject. In 2014, these pupils performed better than others nationally in reading and writing but not in mathematics. This is because they are not routinely given harder work.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs did not do as well as similar pupils nationally in 2013. In the last academic year, the progress these pupils made was variable across classes and subjects.
- In 2013 and 2014, disadvantaged pupils achieved better by the end of Year 6 than their classmates in school and similar pupils nationally. They were approximately one term ahead of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the pupil premium funding was used effectively. Because of the way pupils' progress was measured in the past, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in other year groups is variable.
- Work in books shows that the progress of pupils currently in the school is inconsistent. There is good progress in Year 6 but less in other year groups. Presentation is variable, with some pupils showing little pride in their work. Work is marked, but not always effectively. Pupils' comments are sometimes of little value: 'OK' or 'I'll try to remember next time.' There is not always evidence that pupils have made the

corrections suggested.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement. The activities provided for children are not stimulating and often lack purpose. This inhibits the children's ability to persevere and concentrate because the activities do not hold their interest.
- Children do not respond quickly to the teacher because routines are not well established. The learning environment is disorganised. There is little evidence to indicate how the activities are linked together. The work of the children is not displayed in a way which would encourage the children to feel pride in their accomplishments.
- Some good questioning takes place. For example, when talking to children about which numbers were bigger or smaller they were asked how many cupfuls would fill a larger container, so developing the children's awareness of size.
- Children enter school with skills and abilities typical for their age. The weakest areas are in physical development and writing. They make expected progress. The numbers entering Year 1 with a good level of development are similar to most schools. The lack of challenge in the activities provided means that the most able pupils do not make the good progress of which they are capable.
- Assessment is done with the help of a computer package. Parents have access to their child's learning and are able to make their own contributions. There are opportunities for parents to work with the school, for example accompanying the children on 'wellie walks'. Parents speak warmly about the experience of their children as they enter school. Pupils' work in the classroom demonstrates expected progress.
- There are links between the school and the local nursery. Events such as a teddy bears' picnic take place throughout the year so that children enter the school already familiar with the adults in school. This helps the children to settle into school life.

## 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>	126014
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	452878

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matt Cuttress
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Sturgeon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 832003
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