

Slindon CofE Primary School

Meadsway, Slindon, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 0QU

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not had a positive enough impact on the quality of teaching. They have not ensured that the school has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils' progress is often variable. Not enough are working at the expected levels for their age. Teachers are not regular or accurate enough in their assessments of pupils' progress. This has an impact on the planning for pupils' learning and is a barrier to rapid progress.
- Teachers' expectations regarding what pupils can achieve are often not high enough, particularly for those who are most able.
- Pupils' progress slows because they often do not practise spelling or write regularly enough. There are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in solving problems. Pupils' literacy and mathematical skills are not developed in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Children's progress in the early years is often too slow. This is because teachers are not checking progress in all areas of learning frequently enough. Teaching assistants often do not challenge children well enough in phonics lessons.
- Leaders and governors are not holding teachers to account for the progress pupils make. Those who are subject leaders are not effectively monitoring the performance of pupils in their areas of responsibility.
- School improvement documentation is often unclear. It does not identify whether actions to improve progress have been successful.
- Governors do not hold leaders sufficiently to account. They have not fully monitored the impact of pupil premium spending on pupils' outcomes and attendance.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher recognised that improvements were needed. New teachers were appointed and initiatives were implemented to improve pupils' rates of progress. Some initiatives have already had an impact. For example, progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 has rapidly improved.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They have positive attitudes to their learning and behave well in class.
- The curriculum is interesting and varied. Pupils' awareness of the rural environment in which the school is situated, is effectively developed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase the rates of pupils' progress by:
 - developing an accurate and regular system of assessment and then using that assessment information to plan work that meets pupils' needs
 - increasing the proportion of pupils who are working at the expected level for their age
 - ensuring that teachers raise their expectations regarding what pupils can achieve, particularly for the most able
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills, and attempt longer pieces, so that they are better prepared for their next stage of education
 - adopting a consistent and regular approach to the teaching of spelling
 - developing pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils develop their literacy and mathematical skills more frequently in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve rates of progress in the early years so that they are better prepared for their learning in Year 1 by:
 - ensuring that staff regularly monitor children's progress across all areas of learning
 - giving children the right level of challenge in phonics by providing effective training for teaching assistants.
- Develop leadership and management by:
 - regularly holding teachers accountable for the progress that pupils are making in their class
 - ensuring that school improvement documentation includes measurable success criteria
 - strengthening the roles of subject leaders so that they secure rapid progress for pupils in their areas of responsibility
 - improving the attendance and outcomes of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and putting in place a pupil premium strategy
 - ensuring that governors have the skills to analyse school performance information and hold school leaders to account.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Until recently, leaders and governors have had too generous a view of the school. They have not ensured that teaching has resulted in consistently good progress for all pupils. The pace of improvement has been too variable.
- For a while the school was rather inward looking. However, following a couple of years of weaker progress, the headteacher rightly recognised that improvements needed to be made. She determinedly set about making the necessary changes. New staff were appointed. The headteacher commissioned external advice, as well as support from the local authority, to provide greater clarity regarding the way forward.
- The school is using an ineffective method to track pupils' progress. Consequently, leaders do not have the necessary information to hold teachers sufficiently to account for the progress that pupils are making.
- School improvement documentation has been revised several times since the headteacher decided to make the necessary changes. While there are appropriate targets, such as 'to improve progress in writing', there are no measurable success criteria. As a result, it is hard for the school to judge the effectiveness of its actions.
- Those responsible for subjects do not check pupils' learning and progress in the other classes. Therefore, they are not able to ensure that all pupils are making rapid progress.
- The school has started several initiatives to improve outcomes and progress. Many are at too early a stage to judge their impact. However, the focus on improving reading progress has already had a positive impact.
- Nearly a quarter of the pupils in school have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are accurate in identifying these pupils' needs and the support that is required. However, progress is variable due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Although a few parents expressed concerns, leaders typically use the additional funding to provide additional support and resources appropriately. There are good links with external agencies. Specialists, such as speech and language therapists and educational psychologists, help to make a positive contribution to pupils' outcomes.
- Additional funding for those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is not always well enough used. While some eligible pupils make very strong progress, others do not. This is because teachers are unsure where each pupil is in their learning.
- The physical education and sport premium funding is well used. Additional expertise and improved resources have ensured that more pupils participate in a greater range of sports.
- The curriculum has been well designed and has a positive impact on pupils' development. British values are well promoted. There are effective opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Activities often have a positive impact on pupils' progress. For example, pupils made significant progress when learning how to create animations using computer programs. Progress in music is strong because all pupils are given taster sessions and regularly play the cornet or

clarinet.

- The curriculum is enriched through a large range of extra-curricular activities, including dance and sports clubs. These enable pupils to develop their skills in these subjects in greater depth.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop a keen awareness of the natural environment in which the school is situated. Pupils regularly have visits from local rangers, who explain about how pupils can help local wildlife. 'Forest school' enables pupils to develop a deep understanding of the issues affecting the local woods and hedgerows. In gardening club, pupils learn about how fruit and vegetables are grown and harvested. Pupils learn how to effectively make useful objects out of everyday waste, such as recycled plastic milk containers.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not held leaders sufficiently to account for the progress that pupils are making. This is partly due to the school's weak system for assessment. There is a lack of clear information about the progress of current pupils in the different year groups. However, governors are too generous in their view of pupil performance when considering the published data for previous year groups.
- Governors have not ensured that they fulfil their responsibilities when monitoring the pupil premium. There is no pupil premium strategy in place for this year. In previous years governors have not fully analysed the impact of the additional funding. This has resulted in very variable progress for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- Governors are committed. They want to bring about the necessary improvements and use their broad range of skills and experience to good effect.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school makes sure that all the appropriate pre-employment checks are diligently conducted to ensure that pupils are protected. Checks are clearly recorded in a detailed document called a single central record. Several governors and staff have undergone safer recruitment training.
- Leaders engage well with parents to ensure that pupils are kept safe at all times.
- Staff are well informed. They follow the appropriate guidance about how to protect pupils from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- Staff are well trained in child protection. They are ever-vigilant and work closely with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching over time has not been effective enough to enable pupils to make rapid progress. Expectations regarding what pupils can achieve are often too low, especially for those pupils who are most able. Consequently, many do not reach the standards that are expected for their age.
- The school's system for checking the progress that pupils make lacks accuracy. As a

result, teachers do not always provide work that meets pupils' needs.

- Pupils' progress in writing across the school is variable. Teachers often do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills and attempt longer pieces of work. Consequently, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not well enough prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In some classes spelling skills are not well enough developed. This is because there is not a consistent approach to ensuring that pupils regularly practise spelling across the school.
- There are not enough chances for pupils to write and apply their mathematics skills in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in science there was very little written work.
- Mathematics progress is inconsistent. In some classes pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills in solving real-life problems. Leaders and staff have acted to improve progress in mathematics and a new system has just been introduced. However, it was too early to judge its impact at the time of the inspection.
- Teaching staff are working hard to make the necessary improvements. They are quickly responding to the external advice and support from the local authority.
- The impact of the school's new approach to written and oral feedback in lessons is positive. Pupils said that they were now much clearer about what teachers wanted from them regarding improvements in their work.
- Teaching assistants support learning effectively in both key stage 1 and 2, particularly for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff take every effort to make sure that pupils develop their self-confidence. Parents reported that the school has enabled their children to flourish and develop talents in dance, music and sport.
- Residential trips for the older pupils to activity centres are effective. Pupils say that these trips have helped them to develop a belief in their own abilities together with an understanding of the importance of teamwork.
- Pupils are polite and caring towards each other. Older pupils carefully look after the younger pupils in the school. In the playground, play buddies ensure that no one feels left out.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They know how to look after themselves from potential dangers online. The school benefits from regular visits by the local police officer, who talks to the pupils about the danger of strangers.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school. One pupil expressed the views of many when they said, 'It's a small school and we all know each other and so no one would want to bully.' Pupils said that if they ever had any concerns then they would tell their teacher immediately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Overall attendance is similar to the national average. However, levels of attendance for those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, while beginning to improve, are well below the national average.
- In lessons pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning, they are keen to get on with their work, even when the work is not sufficiently challenging.
- Around the school and in the playground, pupils behave in a calm and orderly way.
- Most parents consider that pupils behave well in the school. They say that the school works hard to help new pupils to establish friendship groups.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In the past, pupils have not made the progress that they were capable of achieving. At the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment has typically been lower than the national average.
- The progress of current pupils in the school is inconsistent, particularly in writing and mathematics. This is because work in these subjects is not planned carefully enough to meet pupils' needs. Examples were seen during the inspection where pupils in Year 5 were doing the same work as those in Year 6.
- Those pupils in school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make variable progress. Books show that while some of these pupils make rapid progress, for others, progress is inconsistent. Often this is due to variations in the quality of teaching.
- Those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, including those who are most able, make inconsistent progress. Some attain well, but the achievement of others is less strong. Sometimes this is due to poor attendance. Often leaders have not clearly analysed the difference that the pupil premium funding is making in addressing individual pupils' barriers to learning.
- The most able pupils across the school do not make the rapid progress that they are capable of achieving. This is because teachers do not always challenge pupils sufficiently. They often do not have high enough expectations regarding what the most able pupils can achieve.
- In reading, pupils make variable progress. However, recent improvements in teaching reading have demonstrated a positive impact for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This is evident in the increased number of pupils who progress rapidly, to attain the expected standard from their low starting points.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- From their different starting points not enough children make good progress and the proportions of children achieving a good level of development are typically lower than

the national average. Consequently, many children are not well enough prepared for their learning in Year 1.

- Leaders and teachers agree that up till now they have not checked each child's progress frequently enough. For example, while a check is made of skills in number when a child joins the school, several months then elapse before another check is made.
- Teaching is inconsistent. Phonics skills are often not well enough developed because teaching assistants do not have enough training to ensure that all children are fully challenged. This often hampers children's progress in phonics.
- Children typically make stronger progress in developing their communication skills. This is because activities provided, such as in the role play area, are stimulating and encourage children to talk to each other.
- Staff work closely with parents to ensure that children settle down quickly into the class. Parents have commented about the warm and welcoming atmosphere. They say that staff are always ready to talk to them. Relationships between staff and children are a strength. Behaviour is good and children play well together.
- Leaders have acted on external advice to improve both the classroom and the outdoor environment. They have ensured that children in the early years can move easily between activities.
- Welfare arrangements are effective. Staff diligently check the classroom and outside area every morning to ensure that they are safe for children. There are strong links with outside agencies, who regularly visit the school. Safeguarding procedures are effective.
- There are too few children in early years who qualify for pupil premium to comment on their attainment and progress without them being identified. However, typically, additional government funding in the early years is appropriately used.

School details

Unique reference number	125994
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10024671

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Elkin
Headteacher	Jane Walters
Telephone number	01243 814330
Website	www.slindonprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	office@slindon.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 April 2013

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the pupil premium and recent examination results on its website.
- Slindon CofE Primary School is a small village school. Despite its rural location, a high percentage of pupils enter and leave the school throughout the school year. Currently, roughly a quarter of pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been at the school for less than two years. Nearly half of the pupils in Year 2 have recently joined.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-aged classes. Children in the early years are taught in a full-time Reception class that also caters for pupils in key stage 1. The second class is for those in Years 3 and 4. The third class is for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Most pupils are White British and the proportion of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds is very low. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is a little higher than that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much

higher than the national average. Currently nearly a quarter of the pupils on roll have some identified special educational need and/or disability.

- There has been some staff turbulence since the previous inspection. Most of the teachers are new.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes. All observations were with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- Discussions were held with a group of pupils regarding what it was like to be a pupil at this school. The inspector looked at work in books and listened to some pupils reading from Years 2 and 6. The inspector considered the 28 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector took account of a letter and 24 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire. She also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The views expressed by members of staff in five online questionnaires were considered.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation and policies, including the school's improvement plan. Information about the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was considered, along with documents about pupils' current attainment and progress. Documents checking the quality of teaching and learning and records relating to behaviour, attendance, child protection and safeguarding were also examined.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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