

# Inspection of Sandgate Primary School

Coolinge Lane, Folkestone, Kent CT20 3QU

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Inspection dates: 15 and 16 September 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils readily embrace the school's values of courtesy, determination, respect, equality, compassion and friendship. They develop a strong understanding of these values because these form an integral part of assemblies and class discussions.

Pupils feel happy, safe and well cared for. They have strong relationships with staff. Pupils get on well together. Bullying is rare, and if it does happen, staff deal with it quickly.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils grow in confidence and achieve well by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. They take pride in their work and lessons are calm and purposeful. They play harmoniously at social times and understand how important good behaviour is. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning from the time they start in early years.

Pupils take on positions of responsibility enthusiastically. Some are trained as 'peer mediators' so they can help other pupils solve friendship issues that may occasionally happen. Other pupils join the school council or apply to become 'values ambassadors'. A highlight of the year for many pupils is organising the annual 'summer sizzle' school fete.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The headteacher ensures that Sandgate is a caring school where pupils work hard and try their best. Children make a strong start in early years, developing their concentration well and learning how to play together sensibly. Lessons in other year groups are calm and purposeful. Teachers develop rich experiences to make sure that pupils develop their resilience and their sense of right and wrong across the school. Pupils regularly take part in classroom debates about moral questions.

Leaders have organised the reading curriculum well, beginning from the start of early years. Teachers have a deep understanding of how to teach phonics because of the high-quality training they receive. They help children in early years to catch up quickly if they fall behind. Pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy as they move through key stage 1.

Pupils love reading. They read frequently with their teachers, regularly use the school library and develop their understanding of different genres and authors as they move into key stage 2. Leaders involve parents and carers in helping their children to read. For example, leaders organise sessions to advise parents about how to support their children to read at home.

In mathematics, children in Reception begin to learn basic numeracy as soon as they start. Leaders have thought carefully about how and when to teach mathematical knowledge. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They help pupils to develop their understanding of increasingly complex mathematical concepts. Teachers check

what pupils have learned. They make necessary adjustments if pupils do not fully understand what they have been taught.

In subjects other than reading and mathematics, such as science and geography, leaders have not clearly selected and organised the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Pupils do not always understand the knowledge underlying the activities that they are doing. Leaders are aware of the need to improve the organisation of knowledge in these subjects and have begun to put measures in place to address this.

Teachers have a keen understanding of how to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. External specialist teachers train staff in how to support these pupils. The curriculum is adapted effectively so that pupils with SEND learn the same knowledge and have the same opportunities as their peers. If children in early years need extra help, their needs are identified quickly and appropriate support is put in place.

Staff find leaders' support invaluable. They overwhelmingly believe that the school is led and managed well. Staff feel that leaders consider their views and well-being when making decisions. Those staff who were spoken to particularly appreciated leaders' strong support and help during the partial closure of the school earlier this year. Staff are proud to work at Sandgate.

Governors have not checked what leaders have told them about the school in sufficient depth. As a result, governors do not have a fully accurate view of the strengths and relative weaknesses of the school. Governors have a range of skills and are knowledgeable about education, and they are keen to use this expertise to improve their monitoring.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pertinent training ensures that staff understand the latest government guidance on how to keep pupils safe. Staff are vigilant about spotting the signs that suggest pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders ensure that staff know how to report any concerns about pupils that they have. Leaders also work closely with families, when appropriate, if there are concerns about particular pupils.

The school's curriculum ensures that pupils understand the potential dangers of using the internet and how they can keep themselves safe online.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In wider curriculum subjects, such as science and physical education, leaders have not planned and sequenced the knowledge that they intend pupils to learn

in enough detail. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could over time. Leaders should ensure that plans make clear what knowledge is being taught, and when it is being taught, in all subjects. It is clear that leaders have taken some action to improve their planning in this area. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

- Governors rely too much on leaders' assertions when they are evaluating the school. Governors' views of the strengths and priorities of the school are not detailed and accurate enough. They need to improve the ways in which they check that what leaders tell them is correct.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118505
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199417
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Lisa Monk-Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Green
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sandgateprimaryschool.co.uk">www.sandgateprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 May 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2016.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, governors and a local authority representative.
- On the first day of the inspection, inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, physical education and geography. This meant that in each subject, inspectors met with subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff and from the 35 staff who responded to Ofsted’s confidential questionnaire.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of 94 parents who responded to the confidential Ofsted questionnaire for parents, including 93 free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the views of 136 pupils who responded to Ofsted’s confidential questionnaire for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Harry Ingham, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Hanna Miller

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Mrs Fisher-Pink

Ofsted Inspector

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