

Inspection of a good school: South Bersted CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO22 9PZ

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 September 2022

Outcome

South Bersted CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

South Bersted is a friendly and welcoming school. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. This helps pupils to feel safe in school, because they know an adult will listen if they have any worries. Pupils value each other's differences. As one said, 'I love how everyone can find a friend here.'

Pupils enjoy learning about the world and their part in it as they grow to be global citizens. They regularly discuss topical issues together. Pupils try to make a practical difference, for example by learning about bee keeping and by training to be 'junior medics'. Pupils benefit from a wide range of musical, sporting and cultural extra-curricular activities. They like trying out new sports, such as climbing, and are enthusiastic about forthcoming visits to the planetarium and Fishbourne Roman Villa.

Pupils are happy in school. They have a strong sense of fairness and really appreciate the new rules about behaviour that they helped to create. Pupils know that on the rare occasion there is any bullying, this will be dealt with sensitively and straight away. Parents universally praise the school. As one said, 'Staff genuinely care and always take an active interest in pupils and their achievements.'

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

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils' achievement in a full range of subjects. Leaders and staff have built a curriculum that is vibrant, interesting and well organised. They have identified what they want pupils to know and in what order, by the time they leave primary school. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Well-chosen activities and resources help pupils to develop their understanding. As a result, pupils typically achieve well, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively in their learning.

Leaders recognise that in some subjects, such as writing, pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. Leaders have identified that this is because pupils have not had

enough time to practise and embed new knowledge before moving on to harder work. Leaders have revised the content of what is taught in certain subjects to give pupils more time to learn and embed key knowledge. Similar adjustments are being made in other curriculum areas.

Leaders prioritise reading across the school. Right from the start of the early years, adults make sure that children are immersed in opportunities to develop strong speaking and listening skills. Pupils throughout the school delight in listening to the wide variety of stories that are read to them. As pupils get older, they are introduced to an increasing range of books that they enjoy reading for themselves.

Adults are trained well in how to teach pupils to read. Pupils who need it benefit from extra help and time to practise reading. As a result, most pupils gain the knowledge and skills to read independently by the end of Year 2. A few pupils do not read as well as they should. This is because the books they use to practise their phonics skills are not always closely matched to the letter sounds that they know.

Leaders' care for pupils and their families is central to the school's success. Parents praised the school's communication, especially in the early years when children first join the school. Staff work well with outside agencies to secure extra help and support when pupils need it. This includes for pupils with SEND and any pupils who need additional help to manage their behaviour.

Leaders are well organised and knowledgeable about education. They know the school's strengths and work hard to improve those aspects that need further development. Leaders are rightly proud of their staff. Leaders' training programme for staff helps teachers and teaching assistants to become experts in all the different subjects they teach. Staff feel well supported in managing their workload. They appreciate how well leaders and governors listen and respond to their needs and ideas. Governors are well informed about the school. Their oversight of safeguarding is especially strong.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Well-trained staff understand the safeguarding risks in the local area. They know how to recognise the signs that might indicate a concern. Staff know and use the correct procedures if they are worried about a pupil.

Safeguarding leaders liaise well with external safeguarding partners when a pupil needs extra help to keep safe. Leaders monitoring of safeguarding allows them to spot any patterns of concern and make sure that the safeguarding curriculum responds to these. Pupils are knowledgeable about the risks associated with using the internet, crossing roads and being by the seaside.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not made sure that pupils have enough time to embed their learning before gaining new knowledge. This creates gaps in pupils' understanding over time. Leaders need to refine what is taught, so that pupils have enough time to practise and revisit the important knowledge that leaders have identified.
- Sometimes, the books that pupils use to practise their phonics skills are too hard for them. This slows their development as accurate, speedy readers. Leaders need to make sure that the books that pupils use to learn to read are matched to the sounds they know, so that they quickly learn to read fluently.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

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.

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

Unique reference number	125973
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10240590
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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jon Davis
Headteacher	Noel Goodwin
Website	www.southbersted.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- South Bersted Church of England School is a Church of England faith school.
- The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in March 2016. It is due for reinspection this academic year.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2018. He was previously the deputy headteacher of the school.
- The school uses one unregistered provider of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. She met with the members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector held telephone conversations with a representative of the Diocese of Chichester and a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders and pupils about the curriculum in some other subjects, and looked at some pupils' work in these subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector held meetings with safeguarding leaders, governors, teachers and pupils. She scrutinised the single central record and minutes of meetings about safeguarding, and checked safeguarding records.
- The inspector took account of a wide range of other information, including the school's improvement plans, school policies and governor minutes. She spoke with pupils about their experiences in the school. She took account of parents' views expressed in the 22 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey and free-text responses. The inspector also considered the 19 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 31 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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