

# Inspection of a good school: Sandown School

Golf Road, Deal, Kent CT14 6PY

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Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

## Outcome

Sandown School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Kate Luxford. This school is part of Deal Education Alliance for Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jo Hygate, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roger Walton.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils here are happy, kind and courteous. Staff set ambitious aims for pupils' learning, and pupils do their best to fulfil these. From early years, children follow clear routines, and they know what is expected of them. They enjoy coming to school and live up to the school's values. Pupils know that they will be recognised for making the right choices. They really appreciate events such as the end of term 'hot chocolate party', for those who consistently do their best. Pupils feel valued and listened to in this school. For example, they have helped to shape the anti-bullying policy. As a result, pupils are confident that staff will help them to resolve any worries that they might have.

The 'Green Zone' provision is a central feature of life at Sandown. In the woodland area, pupils enjoy activities such as open-air cooking, and practise being role models for younger peers. Leaders also provide structured activities to help pupils to cooperate and communicate. This is especially beneficial for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy history walks and visits, which help them learn about Deal and its heritage. This helps all pupils to develop a sense of their community and their place within it.

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

The school has mapped out what pupils need to learn at every stage of their education. Teachers make thoughtful adjustments to the sequence of learning if their pupils need more time on certain topics. They are determined that pupils with SEND should access the full breadth of learning. To support this, staff are trained to identify pupils' needs accurately. They work closely with parents and outside agencies to make sure pupils' needs are met well.

Teachers explain learning well. They show pupils what to do and use examples effectively. For example, pupils use counters and diagrams to break down large numbers in mathematics. Teachers also set up the classroom environment to support learning. This is established from early years, where children can check letters and sounds for themselves. Recall is woven into the curriculum so that pupils encounter key knowledge repeatedly. Teachers set tasks which prompt pupils to think, using questioning well to check whether pupils understand the ideas they are working on. Sometimes, teachers do not address pupils' misconceptions and errors consistently enough. This means that some pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

The school devotes time and resources to pupils at the early stages of reading. Weaker readers receive extra help to catch up. In Reception, some children struggle at first with whole-class activities. They still complete their phonics learning, but in a smaller setting. Many weaker readers progress swiftly. However, some pupils get confused between certain sounds, and struggle to read some words. Pupils enjoy reading, reflecting the value that staff place on it. They select interesting books in the library and are enthusiastic about scoring well in book quizzes.

Overall, pupils achieve well. They develop a secure grasp of the knowledge and skills that they need for future learning. For example, in history, pupils produce interesting written work which shows their understanding of the past. Published outcomes are not fully reflective of the improvements which the school has made. Currently, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND achieve well, and are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils concentrate well in class. They respond swiftly to teachers' instructions. This helps them to make the most of learning time. The school provides pupils with thought-provoking cultural experiences. For example, pupils delight in dressing up to recreate famous artworks. They enjoy the many clubs and activities that they can take part in, especially school productions. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils benefit equally from these opportunities. The school helps pupils to engage with topical news items and to consider the rights and wrongs of different issues. As a result, pupils are prepared well for the challenges of modern life.

Staff speak positively about how leaders consider their workload and well-being. New developments are rolled out in a considered way, and staff training is effective. Staff also benefit from the support available more widely within the academy trust. Governors and executive leaders work closely with the school. They visit the school to monitor priority areas. Clear reporting systems enable trustees to assure themselves that the school is moving in the right direction.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Some weaker readers do not consistently remember the sounds that they have been taught. As a result, these pupils get letters and sounds mixed up, and can find it difficult to decode the words they read as well as they could. The school should strengthen weaker readers' recall of phonics in order to help these pupils to catch up.
- Sometimes, teachers do not address misconceptions and errors in pupils' work systematically. This means that some pupils do not develop their understanding or accuracy as securely as they could. The school should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are closed swiftly and consistently.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, also called Sandown School, to be good in March 2013.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147056
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288084
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	380
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Roger Walton
<b>CEO of trust</b>	Jo Hygate
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Luxford
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sandown.kent.sch.uk">www.sandown.kent.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Sandown School is part of the Deal Education Alliance for Learning Trust.
- Sandown School converted to become an academy school in April 2019. When its predecessor school, also called Sandown School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with school leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. The inspector also met representatives from the trust, including trustees and the chief executive officer.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, 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 discussed the curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, governors, trustees, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts the pupils' interests first.

### **Inspection team**

Daniel Botting, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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