

# Inspection of Sidlesham Primary School

Keynor Lane, Sidlesham, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 7NL

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Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

Pupils and their parents enjoy being part of this tight-knit community. Pupils love their school, feeling safe and very well cared for by staff. Strong relationships exist between pupils across year groups. At break times, pupils socialise widely, including others in their games. Pupils behave well and are polite and respectful. They enjoy being rewarded for their successes in weekly celebration assemblies. Diversity is valued with one pupil summing this up by saying, 'At Sidlesham we take differences as positives. It would be boring if we were just the same.'

The school recognises that changes in leadership over recent years have had a negative impact on pupils' learning. The new headteacher has ambitious plans for improving the quality of education that pupils receive. However, current weaknesses in how the curriculum is designed and delivered means that pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils take full advantage of the broad enrichment offer that the school provides alongside the academic curriculum. Many enjoy attending sports clubs or learning an instrument. 'Forest Fridays' are a highlight, where pupils value learning about the environment. Pupils develop a strong sense of responsibility through leadership roles, including school councillors, house captains and school librarians.

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

The school is emerging from a period of leadership instability. The appointment of the new headteacher in recent months has brought greater stability. Leaders recognise the urgent improvements that are needed in the quality of education that pupils receive. They are highly ambitious for what pupils can and should achieve and are taking quick action to rectify problems with the quality of education that pupils receive. However, while the new curriculum is being prepared, there is not currently clear oversight of how well pupils are learning across all subjects.

The school's curriculum is not designed so that all pupils will learn the full knowledge and skills that they should. This is because the curriculum has not been organised appropriately for the school's mixed year group classes. Additionally, in some subjects, there is a lack of clarity in what pupils should learn and when. New leaders recognise this and are taking steps to ensure that the curriculum is more coherently planned and sequenced.

Despite low achievement in published reading assessments in previous years, the way that reading is taught has improved recently. The school's chosen phonics scheme sets out clearly the sounds and words that pupils need to learn over time. Staff have the expertise to teach this effectively, providing many opportunities for pupils to recap previous learning. Those who need additional support to keep up with their classmates benefit from close support. This means that pupils are now learning to read more confidently and fluently.

Despite these improvements, pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should in other subjects. The way the curriculum is taught is inconsistent. While sometimes new learning is introduced effectively, this is not always the case and some teachers have not had the necessary training to help pupils to build secure understanding. For example, in mathematics teachers do not always explain key concepts clearly enough or check pupils' understanding systematically.

In early years, children are well cared for. They are happy and have secure relationships with staff. Staff read to children well and introduce them to exciting and interesting stories. However, many of the activities that children learn from lack purpose and do not always help them to develop important understanding in readiness for key stage 1.

There is a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school where the support individual pupils need to behave and learn is identified. Staff establish clear routines for pupils' behaviour right from the start of the early years. As a result, pupils are able to focus on their learning. The individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well known by the school. Personalised plans are skilfully designed in collaboration with parents. This ensures teachers have the necessary knowledge to adapt teaching effectively.

Attendance has improved recently. The school are working more diligently to address absence, to ensure the whole school community recognise the importance of regular attendance. In addition, the school are providing further support to those who find attending school more challenging. However, there are still too many pupils who are persistently absent. This includes a significant number of disadvantaged pupils.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils benefit from opportunities to debate and hear others' perspectives. This helps foster inclusive attitudes. Pupils develop a thorough understanding of healthy relationships. They also learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils value the strong pastoral support available to them.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school has not yet precisely identified and fully sequenced the detailed knowledge that they want pupils to learn in a number of subjects. This means that pupils are not systematically building understanding over time. The school

should continue their work to explicitly identify what pupils should learn in all areas, including in early years, in readiness for the next stage of their education.

- There are inconsistencies in teachers' subject and pedagogical knowledge. This means that pupils do not learn as well as they should. The school needs to ensure that teachers deliver the intended curriculum consistently well to maximise pupils' achievement across all subjects.
- Persistent absence at the school is too high for too many pupils, including some who are more disadvantaged. This means that these pupils are missing out on too much of their vital education. The school should continue their work to intensify actions to secure better rates of attendance for those pupils who need more support.

## 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>	125853
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321896
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Stuart Blunden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sophia Koiston
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sidleshamprimaryschool.co.uk">www.sidleshamprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	20 and 21 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes in staffing and leadership including the appointment of the headteacher who joined in April 2024.
- The school currently uses two unregistered alternative providers to support the education of a very small number of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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 lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, the leader responsible for pupils with SEND, other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with governors and had a conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and staff to hear their views.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential Ofsted survey for staff, pupils and Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Martin Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sue Keeling

His Majesty's Inspector

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