

# Inspection of Southway Junior School

Southway, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 9SU

---

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Inspection dates:         | 14 and 15 January 2025 |
| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b>            |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Good</b>            |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b>            |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b>            |
| Previous inspection grade | Good                   |

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

The school provides a caring environment where all pupils are made to feel welcome. Pupils are safe and well looked after. They enjoy positive relationships with staff who motivate pupils to do their best. Pupils work hard in lessons and achieve high standards. They focus and show resilience in their learning. Pupils rise to the high expectations of behaviour which underpin the school values. They understand, for example, the importance of kindness and respect for all.

Teamwork is an integral part of school life. Pupils work well together, such as on 'house charity day', where they organise an event to raise money for their chosen charities. 'Values visionaries' gather pupils' views and work with each other on proposed changes to the school. The school encourages pupils to be responsible citizens. For example, 'litter leaders' and 'bird hide monitors' look after the school's outside areas and help to protect the environment.

A wide range of educational trips and activities are in place to enrich pupils' learning and broaden their horizons. Music and sports are well promoted, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to nurture their talents and interests. These include various musical groups, singing performances, sports clubs and tournaments.

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

The school offers a broad and ambitious curriculum. Recently, leaders have reviewed and changed the curriculum in some subjects. Staff agree with these changes and value the school's collaborative approach. They appreciate that leaders are mindful of staff well-being and workload when making decisions. Governors strike a clear balance between holding leaders to account and supporting them well. With school leaders, governors have played a pivotal role in navigating the school through leadership changes over the past year.

The school has made well-considered choices about what should be taught and when. Learning is sequenced to build up pupils' knowledge over time such as understanding of chronology in history and developing mathematical skills. Ongoing training opportunities ensure teachers are secure in their subject-specific knowledge. Teachers check pupils' understanding carefully and use appropriate resources to support learning. As a result, pupils achieve well in many subjects, as reflected in national assessment outcomes at the end of Year 6. They can recall essential knowledge and apply it to new learning. However, some subjects are at an earlier stage of review and development. There is some variability in the implementation of the curriculum in these subjects. As a result, pupils' knowledge is less secure.

The school promotes a love of reading. The '100 book challenge', for example, inspires many pupils to read a wide range of high-quality texts. Older pupils act as 'buddy readers' to support younger pupils with their reading. The school is quick to identify weaker readers when they join the school. Often, this includes increasingly close work with the nearby infant school. Staff provide effective support to address gaps in pupils' phonics

knowledge so these pupils catch up quickly.

The school has effective systems in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It takes action to meet the needs of an increasing number of pupils with SEND. In many ways, the school makes appropriate adaptations to help pupils with SEND learn. For example, successful strategies include pre-teaching and the use of vocabulary banks. However, some pupils with SEND and some disadvantaged pupils struggle to learn well. This is often because they have not securely learned the foundational knowledge they need to complete some lesson activities. This means they do not always learn as much as they could.

Staff follow a consistent approach to managing behaviour. Pupils are well behaved, polite and friendly. Attendance rates are high. The school is meticulous in its work to identify and address any concerns around attendance and punctuality. Staff work with families to break down any barriers to regular school attendance.

Pupils' personal development weaves through the curriculum. Pupils are knowledgeable about aspects such as diet and exercise, how to look after their mental health and online safety. They learn about diversity and are taught to accept people's differences.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Recent changes to the curriculum are not fully embedded. There is some variability in the delivery of the curriculum in some subjects. This means that pupils have not gained the depth of knowledge they should have. The school should continue with its work to develop and embed the curriculum.
- At times, curriculum thinking and teaching adaptations do not take pupils' needs fully into account. Some pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, struggle to access learning as a result. The school should continue its work to ensure that suitable adaptations are made so all pupils can successfully learn the school's ambitious curriculum.

## **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>             | 125941   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | West Sussex  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10341609   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Junior   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 7 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 362  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Elinor Wood  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Vanessa Smith  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.southwayjunior.co.uk">www.southwayjunior.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 2 and 4 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.          |

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone changes in leadership. The headteacher took up post in April 2024.
- The school uses three unregistered alternative provisions.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have

taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body, and held a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, geography and physical education. 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. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation provided by leaders, including safeguarding records, behaviour logs, attendance information and the school's development plan.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and staff and evaluated responses to the online staff survey.
- Inspectors considered responses to the survey, Ofsted Parent View. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Debra Anderson

Ofsted Inspector

Kirstine Boon

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2025