

# Sandown Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114447
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	311606
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gavin Jones

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	387
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matthew Carter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Sargent
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	The Ridge Hastings TN34 2AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 436983
<b>Fax number</b>	01424 722817

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	311606

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large primary school. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above that nationally, as is the proportion of pupils receiving free school meals. High numbers enter and leave the school between the Reception year and Year 6.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. It is rapidly improving and has been effective in raising achievement over the last two years. This is owing to the vision and drive of the headteacher, which has focused well on the main priorities. Whilst all pupils' achievement is currently good, standards remain average. Nevertheless, the school, through a number of well-considered strategies, has seen achievement reach its highest levels for three years at the end of Year 6. The chair and vice-chair of governors understand well the school's strengths and weaknesses and can question the school about the decisions it wishes to take. They have rightly identified that there is a need to extend the responsibility of subject leaders. This is because these middle managers do not have a strong enough overview of the school's work in different subjects.

The Foundation Stage has improved and provision there is good with outstanding features. Pupils achieve well and reach standards expected for their age by the start of Year 1. Through the rest of the school, pupils achieve well especially in mathematics and science. The school's tracking shows that pupils are reaching standards at least in line with those expected of them. However, the school is not complacent and plans are underway to improve further the achievement in writing, where progress is not as strong. Through the strategic placement of staff, good monitoring of teaching and good professional development, teaching and learning have improved. Teaching is good overall as reflected in the good progress that most pupils make. Relationships are strong and teachers provide stimulating activities that are planned well. Consequently, because changes have been made in both the curriculum and teaching styles, pupils are now more motivated to learn. Of the new curriculum, one parent commented, 'The creative curriculum has captured the imagination of the children'. Occasionally, and particularly in English, these activities are not matched as well to the needs of all abilities with pupils being unclear at the end of the lesson about what they have learnt.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good and have improved alongside their academic achievements. Social skills develop year on year, as does pupils' understanding of moral issues such as bullying. This is because of the tremendous commitment on behalf of all adults in the school to ensure pupils are cared for, guided and supported extremely well, especially in behaviour. Both teaching and non-teaching staff have received training in this area and this has been used to very good effect.

Weaknesses noted at the last inspection have been tackled well. Based on a clear understanding of what needs to be done next, the school is moving from strength to strength showing a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good induction arrangements help children settle happily and make a positive start to their education in a very caring environment. Children's standards when they start school are below national expectations. Children's profiles show that they achieve well in each of the areas of learning, because the teaching is good. Their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good which ensures good behaviour and relationships. The curriculum meets their needs well. Early reading activities, including phonic work, give the children a sound foundation for learning. Very good care arrangements exist to ensure their safety and health.

Effective links with parents help involve them in their children's education and keep them well informed of progress. The manager of the Foundation Stage has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and has been able to take effective steps to improve it. Accommodation and resources in the Foundation Stage, and especially the outside provision, are outstanding. It is a rich and stimulating place for children to learn.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve standards and achievement in English, by raising the quality of teaching and ensuring that lesson activities are consistently matched to the needs of all pupils.
- Provide opportunities for continuing professional development of middle managers, to ensure that they have a strong overview of provision in their subjects.
- Involve pupils more in their learning by providing regular opportunities for pupils to review their own work and note the progress they feel they are making.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement and progress in both mathematics and science are especially good. Standards in writing still cause the school some concern although the most recent assessment and tracking records show that the school is on line to make further improvements with the current cohort. Completed work shows that the school is providing pupils with a wide range of writing opportunities with many links to other subjects. Through the school, pupils achieve well in relation to their relative scores at the end of the Foundation Stage. In order to address issues of previous underachievement in English, interventions such as activities in drama, role play, speaking and listening, and poetry have raised achievement. Challenging targets have been set for pupils in Year 6 and progress towards those targets, as noted in the school's tracking, is positive.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is good, although a small number of boys fail to reach an acceptable level of behaviour. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and appear much more involved in the new style of curriculum. However, attendance is still below the national average, despite the best efforts of the school to tackle the problem vested in a small but significant minority of parents. In a discussion with an inspector, a group of pupils described 'fit and healthy' weeks and showed a very high level of understanding about healthy lifestyles. They say how valuable the sport is that is offered after school, which has a very high take up. They speak highly of Year 6 buddies and have good strategies for dealing with small elements of bullying, demonstrating their understanding of how to keep safe. The school council gives pupils a voice in the life of the school. Pupils support the community well through a wide range of charities and have good links with local businesses and shops, helping to prepare them well for their economic future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills through interesting and well-planned activities. Activities often capture pupils' imaginations, such as the lesson in Year 4 on the witches in Macbeth. Teaching assistants very effectively look after those needing extra help. Plans often contain outlines for work for different groups but there are some inconsistencies. Pupils listen attentively and concentrate on the task in hand, showing how well they are motivated to learn. On a few occasions, tasks do not provide the right level of challenge for all abilities in the class, which then limits pupils' progress. Teachers regularly assess pupils, such as by the thorough marking, but on a lesson-by-lesson basis, some teachers do not spend enough time linking the outcomes of the lesson with the learning objectives. Consequently, pupils do not always know how well they have done.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum has been redesigned to support the school motto of 'The best I can be'. Emphasis has rightly been placed on developing pupils' skills in English and mathematics. Practical activities and first hand experiences are used as starting points for learning. Personal, social and emotional education is a major strength which is effectively implemented through all subjects. This has a significant impact upon pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Cross-subject links are at the heart of the school's skills based curriculum. Learning is enriched through the school's links with the local Excellence Cluster and a wide range of special events, visits and visitors. These serve to strengthen links with the local community, for example pupils' visit to the local farm to collect eggs for incubating. Music provision is good and the school choir is very successful. Pupils' access to computers is significantly improved. A wide range of after school clubs is well attended.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

There is a high level of commitment by all staff to keep pupils well cared for, ensuring pupils understand about how to stay safe. A parent commented, 'I am thrilled with the commitment of the staff.' Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are all robust. Pupils receive excellent guidance concerning health issues, enabling them to discuss these issues with a very good degree of understanding. Midday supervisors help considerably at lunchtime. Pupils, vulnerable to exclusion, receive very good support and advice. The school is reviewing its already good provision for nurture groups in the 'Haven'. The school provides effective pastoral and academic support for all pupils and particularly for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, looked after children and pupils with English as an additional language. A parent of a pupil whose first language is not English noted, 'My child is very well supported by staff.' Strategies for assessment give extremely valuable support to teachers. Pupils have targets for literacy and numeracy, although they are not involved regularly enough in assessing their own progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher shows outstanding leadership qualities. She has been the major platform for school improvement. She has successfully empowered an effective senior management team. She has established a calm and supportive climate in the school, with a focus on raising achievement and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. She has identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensured that all staff recognise the need to raise standards. In the parents' questionnaire, one parent wrote, 'The school has really come on recently.' The school is rigorous in its assessment of pupils' learning, and in evaluating results to identify areas for improvement. Detailed and regular tracking shows that many pupils are making good and sometimes rapid progress. The senior management team has implemented many initiatives over the last two years and has made good use of the Excellence Cluster and the local authority to support their work. However, as the school recognises, many of these initiatives have not been in place long enough to result in measurable and consistent improvements. Governors are supportive and involved in the school's longer-term development and there is an increasing confidence within the governing body to challenge the school's work and the standards it achieves.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sandown Primary School, Hastings, TN34 2AA

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. We were pleased to see how happy you were in school and were impressed with how much you knew about how to keep healthy and safe.

This letter is to let you know what your school does well and how it can improve.

- Your behaviour is good all around the school, although there are still a few boys who find it hard to behave all the time.
- Most of your parents are very happy with the school although a few are still upset when bullying occurs.
- Although schoolwork is now much more fun, there are still too many children who do not come to school regularly enough.
- Teaching is good although we have asked that your teachers match your work more closely to what each of you can do.
- One of the things that stands out about the school is the way that you are looked after. We have said this is outstanding and particularly helps you feel safe in school.
- Although you have targets to help you improve your work, we are asking teachers to make sure that you get to know how to make your own judgements about your work and are able to know that you have reached these targets.
- You are achieving well in mathematics and science, but not quite so well in English.
- Your headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard to make improvements and will soon be making further changes in order that teachers can also be more involved in managing improvements in your school even further.

As always, you can help by encouraging everybody to come to school regularly, behaving well and trying to do your best.

I wish you a happy and successful future.

Gavin Jones Lead inspector

14 March 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sandown Primary School, Hastings, TN34 2AA**

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. We were pleased to see how happy you were in school and were impressed with how much you knew about how to keep healthy and safe.

This letter is to let you know what your school does well and how it can improve.

- Your behaviour is good all around the school, although there are still a few boys who find it hard to behave all the time.
- Most of your parents are very happy with the school although a few are still upset when bullying occurs.
- Although schoolwork is now much more fun, there are still too many children who do not come to school regularly enough.
- Teaching is good although we have asked that your teachers match your work more closely to what each of you can do.
- One of the things that stands out about the school is the way that you are looked after. We have said this is outstanding and particularly helps you feel safe in school.
- Although you have targets to help you improve your work, we are asking teachers to make sure that you get to know how to make your own judgements about your work and are able to know that you have reached these targets.
- You are achieving well in mathematics and science, but not quite so well in English.
- Your headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard to make improvements and will soon be making further changes in order that teachers can also be more involved in managing improvements in your school even further.

As always, you can help by encouraging everybody to come to school regularly, behaving well and trying to do your best.

I wish you a happy and successful future.

Gavin Jones  
Lead inspector