

Slinfold Church of England Primary School

The Street, Slinfold, West Sussex, RH13 0RR

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils' overall attainment is below the national average by the end of Year 6. Although most pupils make expected progress, not enough make good progress and reach their full potential.
- In English, pupils have made better progress in reading than writing. Mathematics has been the weakest subject.
- Boys have not achieved as well as girls in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching has some strengths but requires improvement overall. On occasion, work lacks challenge and therefore does not extend pupils' learning, particularly the most able groups.
- Sometimes tasks are not well suited or managed well enough to achieve the intended learning in the lesson and this can hamper pupils and slow their progress.
- The marking policy is not yet fully embedded across the school, although there are some excellent examples in some classes.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher leads the school very effectively and leadership and management overall are good.
- Through their effective actions, the headteacher, senior leaders and all staff, including governors, are beginning to improve achievement because teaching is improving and pupils are making better progress.
- The school is a happy, caring place to be. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They behave well, enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They are friendly, polite and well mannered.
- Communication with parents has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Parents have every confidence in the headteacher and are positive about all aspects of the school's work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons or part lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector talked to pupils about their work, looked at workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, other staff with key leadership responsibilities, groups of pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's own check on its performance, the school improvement plan, records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching, information on pupils' progress and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector took account of 53 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), spoke to some parents at the start of the day and received three written views from parents. She also looked at 15 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- All pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average and has increased over the past four years. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding (the pupil premium), which is additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are in the care of the local authority or are children from service families, is below average. There are currently no pupils who are in care or are from service families.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class.
- There is a pre-school on the school site, which is managed by the school but was not included in this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better throughout the school by ensuring that:
 - work is sufficiently challenging to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable
 - tasks give pupils appropriate learning opportunities and are managed well so that pupils achieve to the best of their ability and make good progress
 - the marking policy is fully embedded in the school and pupils have time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Raise achievement by:
 - building on the already good practice to increase the rate of improvement of pupils' attainment and achievement in mathematics and writing
 - improving the achievement of boys.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because over time, there has been inconsistency in pupils' progress. Small and fluctuating numbers in each year group mean that published data needs to be interpreted with caution because one pupil can represent a high percentage of the total. Most pupils make expected progress from their starting points. However, not enough pupils make good progress to reach above average levels, particularly in mathematics, and attainment has been broadly average to below average over the past three years.
- Children start at the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are at the level expected for their age. They settle well in the Reception Year and make steady progress. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the time they start in Year 1 is a little above average.
- In 2013, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were broadly average with improvements in writing and mathematics from the previous year. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 dipped and were below average, particularly in mathematics. Boys did not achieve as well as girls.
- However, action taken by the headteacher and staff is resulting in considerable improvement for pupils currently in the school because they are making better progress. Pupils' work and the school's checks on progress show that attainment is rising.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well from their starting points as a result of effective leadership and management and well-targeted support.
- In 2013, there were no pupils in the Year 6 group who were supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils in other year groups and they make progress that is at least similar to, and sometimes better than, that of their classmates.
- In the 2013 phonics screening check (linking sounds and letters), the proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected level, which was an increase from 2012 and was above average.
- Reading for enjoyment is promoted well across the school. The school has taken several steps to support boys' achievement in reading, including buying more books to appeal to boys, chosen by the boys themselves, and a 'Cool Boys Reading Club' has been established to target identified pupils.
- Progress in writing has not been as rapid as progress in reading. The school has correctly identified this, and improving writing has been a focus for the whole school. The impact of this is evident in the quality of pupils' writing, in English and in other subjects seen during the inspection.
- The current focus for the school is to improve achievement in mathematics. Leaders identified the areas of mathematics – number, calculation and investigative work – that were holding pupils back and are taking successful action to promote better achievement. Again, the impact of these actions is evident in the improving progress pupils are currently making.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough has been consistently good or better to ensure that pupils reached the levels of learning and knowledge of which they are capable. This has applied particularly to the teaching of writing and mathematics.
- Teachers prepare different work and learning opportunities for pupils of different abilities but this is not always done accurately enough, particularly to challenge and extend the learning of the most able pupils. Therefore pupils' progress is not always as fast as it could be from their starting points to enable them to reach their full potential.
- Sometimes tasks are not sufficiently well suited to the learning intentions in lessons or are not

managed as well as they might be. In these cases, learning is not as effective as it could be and sometimes is hampered by the restrictions of the task. As a result, pupils are not always fully engaged in their learning, and progress slows.

- There are some excellent examples of teachers' marking that gives pupils clear pointers about how to improve their work. The recently introduced colour coded system – 'tickled pink' or 'green for growth' – is understood by pupils who say it helps them improve their work. This system is not yet used as effectively in all classes and sometimes pupils do not have opportunities to respond to teachers' comments.
- Where teaching is most effective, it is challenging, motivating, provides well-planned activities with high expectations for pupils' learning and moves new learning forward at a brisk pace. For example, Year 5 pupils made excellent progress in learning new information and communication technology (ICT) skills when they made charts from Excel spread sheets, with opportunities to apply mathematical skills and interpret data.
- In all classes, there are some consistently good features of teaching. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils, provide attractive and stimulating classrooms, use ICT well to promote learning and are good role models in promoting care and respect for others, which is evident in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Skilled and effective teaching assistants have a secure understanding of their role and are successful in supporting pupils and guiding learning, particularly for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well and behave well in lessons and around the school. They behave equally well whether they are working with teachers, teaching assistants or other adults.
- Pupils enjoy school and have good, positive attitudes to learning and want to do well. Attendance is above average.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because on occasion, when teaching does not fully engage and motivate pupils, they can become inattentive and distracted.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and interesting to talk to. They are courteous to each other and adults and show care and respect to each other and their environment. They value the friendships they make at school. They are proud of their work as an eco school and have a good understanding of environmental issues.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school and say the school helps them understand how to keep safe outside of school, for example riding bikes safely and keeping safe on the internet.
- Access to the school buildings is secure. All staff are vigilant in the level of supervision in the playground to ensure that pupils are safe. There are ongoing discussions by the school's leadership to make the access to the playground and grounds even more secure.
- Pupils say that they are not aware of any bullying in school but are confident that if any issues should arise, teachers would deal with them swiftly and fairly. They have a good awareness that bullying can take many different forms, including name calling and physical and cyber-bullying.
- All parents who responded to the Parent View survey agree that their children feel safe at school and are well looked after and almost all agreed that children are happy and well behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides very effective leadership and is relentless and passionate in her drive to provide the best possible outcomes for pupils. She is well supported by other senior leaders,

staff, parents and governors who share her vision and ambition for the school and its pupils.

- Since the headteacher was appointed, just after the previous inspection, she has focused with great rigour on the priorities for improvement, determined by regular effective checks on performance, while dealing with a number of changes in staff and leaders and on-going staff absences which have, to some extent, hampered the pace of improvement. However, there is now a strong and stable senior leadership team and a new Chair and other new members of the governing body.
- The impact of good leadership and management is shown, for example, in the better progress and improving attainment shown by pupils currently in the school, particularly in writing and mathematics and greatly improved communication with parents, which was an area to improve in the previous inspection report. This demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement. However, leadership and management are not outstanding because despite an improving picture for pupils currently in the school, achievement is not yet good or better.
- There are rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Where weaknesses in teaching are identified, good and effective support is provided and targets for pupils' progress are closely related to the school's improvement priorities.
- There is very strong teamwork in the school and staff say they feel valued and are very positive about the guidance and help they receive in meeting their targets and improving their expertise.
- Senior and middle leaders make a positive contribution to whole-school improvement as well as providing skills and expertise in their particular areas of responsibility. They lead a dedicated staff with good morale.
- The school provides a broad and varied range of subjects. Pupils enjoy and appreciate the range of after-school clubs and these, along with visits and visitors to the school, greatly enhance pupils' experiences. Leaders have worked hard to plan topics on themes that motivate and engage all pupils, and boys in particular, and this is having a notable impact on the quality of boys' writing.
- The school is using the primary school sports funding in a variety of ways. These include the provision of specialist sports coaches and increasing the range and variety of sports available to pupils in after-school clubs, enabling an increased number of pupils to participate, develop skills and broaden the range of their sporting activities. These initiatives are contributing positively to pupils' well-being and health.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through the curriculum, its values and the strong links with the church. The school strives to provide equality of opportunity, as demonstrated in its work to narrow the gap between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils learn in a supportive, caring ethos without fear of discrimination.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school and have total confidence in the headteacher. One parent expressed the views of several others with the comment, 'We feel extremely fortunate to have our headteacher. She is a wonderful and inspirational headteacher and is loved and respected by pupils and their parents.'
- The local authority representative provides 'light touch' support to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A new Chair and four new governors have recently been appointed. The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and improvement priorities. There is a positive and productive relationship with the headteacher and governors are increasingly developing their role in challenging as well as supporting the school, to hold it to account for its performance. Governors know how well the school is doing compared to the national picture, from their own work, training sessions and information from the headteacher. They have a good awareness of the school's pay and promotion processes and check the performance of staff and the quality of teaching. There is a good awareness of how the school is using its pupil premium and sports funding and how this is providing beneficial experiences and support for pupils. Governors make sure that school policies are regularly reviewed and that safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125995
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	441061

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Beth Brown
Headteacher	Jill Hine
Date of previous school inspection	30–31 March 2011
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