

Sheddingdean Community Primary School

Petworth Drive, Burgess Hill, RH15 8JT

Inspection dates 23–24 September 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not consistently good. Not all pupils are helped to make consistently good progress as they move through the school. As a result, achievement is too variable: year on year, between subjects and between groups of pupils. In Key Stage 1, pupils' targets are set too low.
- Pupils are not systematically taught basic skills for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium is not as good as it needs to be.
- Some pupils are not keen enough to learn and do not show enough determination in lessons.
- Leaders are too accepting of the variation in pupils' attainment, attributing this too readily to differences between year groups rather than the quality of teaching. This undermines the work to improve teaching further.
- Leaders' recording and analysis of information about pupils' achievement are not good enough to help leaders identify where improvements are needed, or check that the actions to improve teaching are boosting progress.
- The governing body does not always challenge the headteacher adequately over pupils' achievement, and has not ensured the school environment is well maintained.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has taken effective action to eradicate inadequate teaching.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils with Gypsy Roma heritage make good progress.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils aid their progress well.
- The curriculum and the school's ethos prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Most pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance has improved recently. Discipline is good and the school is a safe and happy place.
- Governors are committed to making sure the school becomes good as soon as possible.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in ten lessons; four with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed an assembly, heard pupils read and discussed their reading progress with them. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils. Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff around the school and with parents at the start of the school day.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, other staff with significant responsibilities and two representatives of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from West Sussex local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 38 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents, and responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents. These included the school’s own information about pupils’ achievement, teachers’ planning, records showing leaders’ checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to keeping pupils safe. Inspectors also considered governing body records, the school’s plans for developing the curriculum and assessment, a recent report from an external consultant and reports about the use of additional funding being provided by the government.

Inspection team

Sian Thornton, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Penelope Orme

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sheddingdean Community Primary School is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for which the school receives additional funding (pupil premium), is average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school serves small groups of pupils with Gypsy Roma and Asian heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2013. Three teachers left the school in the summer and five new teachers joined the staff this term. Three of the new teachers are newly qualified teachers (NQTs).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils make consistently good progress, and achieve at least the expected learning in reading, writing and mathematics when they are aged seven and 11, by ensuring that:
 - basic skills for reading, writing and mathematics are taught systematically, including in Reception
 - teachers make effective use of information about pupils' progress to plan lessons and activities at the right level for all groups of pupils, including the most able
 - teachers adapt lessons promptly when they find that the learning they have prepared is too easy or too difficult for the class or for individuals
 - teachers effectively deploy teaching assistants and practical resources more effectively to benefit the progress of all groups of pupils, including the most able.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils when they are learning, by ensuring work engages pupils' interests fully and that pupils are expected to work hard.
- Improve the impact of leadership by making sure that:
 - better use is made of the pupil premium to support the achievement of eligible pupils
 - the school sets more challenging progress targets for pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2
 - information about pupils' achievement is recorded and analysed in a way which makes it easy for leaders and governors to use in deciding where improvement is needed
 - all checks on teaching, and the impact of leaders' actions to improve it, focus on the impact on pupils' achievement as the key measure of success
 - the school's website meets statutory requirements
 - governors hold the headteacher to account more fully for pupils' achievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because senior leaders and subject leaders have not made enough difference to teaching and pupils' achievement. They have wrongly regarded the variation in pupils' progress as inevitable due to differences between year groups' abilities. This is now changing, but without the necessary urgency. For example, for the last two years pupils in Years 1 and 2 have not done well enough in the national check on their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics), but changes to the way the school teaches spelling in Key Stage 1 have only recently been made.
- The headteacher introduced regular checks on teaching as soon as she joined the school. As a result, inadequate teaching has been eradicated. These checks on lessons have continued at the start of the new school year, but they do not always focus sharply enough on how well pupils are learning.
- The headteacher has introduced useful systems to assess pupils' achievement and to record and analyse this information. However, the complicated format of the reports produced makes it difficult to see easily if pupils are doing well enough or not. This hinders identification of the right priorities and actions to secure improvement.
- The targets which the school sets for pupils' progress are too low, notably in Year 1 and Year 2, to ensure that pupils achieve at least the expectations for their age.
- Senior leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness are too generous. This is because leaders have credited the work done in the last year to bring about improvement, without checking carefully enough the effect these actions have had on pupils' achievement.
- The roles of subject leaders have been extended in the last year and they are more actively involved in checking teaching and pupils' work. The school has accurately identified that girls need to make better progress in mathematics and the mathematics leader is taking appropriate action. The leadership of special educational needs provision is a strength of the school. The inclusion leader makes intelligent use of information about pupils' progress to direct resources and support, to very positive effect.
- The school has been creative in implementing the new National Curriculum and inspectors saw pupils enthused by this approach. The school is working cooperatively with local schools to develop new assessment systems. The school's curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain, with many opportunities to explore British history and the traditions and cultures represented in British society.
- The school meets requirements for keeping pupils safe, including employment checks and child protection.
- Parents welcome the recent introduction of 'open classrooms', when they can view their child's work, and the introduction of a weekly newsletter. However, the school's website does not include the necessary information for parents about the curriculum or how the school meets the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The school makes effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development through the curriculum, assemblies and opportunities to volunteer. However, the pursuit of excellence is undermined by the poor condition of the learning environment and some of the equipment which pupils use.
- Government sport funding is being used well to develop a wider range of activities and to boost the school's performance in competitions. Pupils are enthusiastic about these developments.
- The local authority had previously identified the school as requiring moderate support and provided some assistance to the headteacher during her induction period. However, it now recognises that the school requires more support to get to good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed to the school. They are often present at school events, including parents' evenings, educational visits, and visiting classrooms. Their pay policy ensures teachers' pay progression is linked to the achievement of their pupils. While governors receive information about pupils' achievement, they do not always probe it sufficiently with leaders to check the impact of the school's work. They receive reports from the school about the use of additional funds provided by the government, but here too they do not check carefully enough whether this spending makes enough difference to pupils. Governors have not ensured that the school website fully meets statutory requirements or taken sufficient care to maintain the school's environment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because, while pupils generally behave well in school, pupils' behaviour when learning is not always good enough. Some pupils lose interest and stop to

chat if their work is too easy or too hard, and do not show determination or ask for help when a task is challenging. When teachers set the same task for the whole class, the most able pupils often do this quickly and without trying to do their best. Too many girls show little interest and enthusiasm for mathematics.

- Pupils say that they do not experience bullying. The school is ready to record any incidents and take appropriate action if required. Older pupils are alert to the dangers of the internet and know how to keep themselves safe online. The vast majority of parents are happy that the school takes good care of pupils and deals well with any bullying.
- The headteacher has taken effective action to improve discipline in the school and, as a result, the rate of pupil detentions has significantly reduced.
- Pupils are courteous and show respect to adults and one another. When Ramadan was celebrated recently, a group of non-Muslim pupils were interested and impressed by a Muslim classmate's devotion. Older pupils help the youngest play happily, and a playground 'buddy' system means no one is left out.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The correct routines for security and first aid are in place. Risk assessments are completed when required and off-site educational visits are well prepared.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not ensuring consistently good progress for all pupils.
- Pupils are not taught basic skills for English and mathematics systematically so as to move well prepared from year to year. At the start of this term, changes were made to the way spelling is taught, but this is very recent, and action has yet to be taken on handwriting and mathematical skills, especially for number and the use of practical equipment.
- Teachers now have reliable information about pupils' progress, but they do not always use this well enough to prepare teaching and activities at the right level for different pupils. Often, when the same task is set for the whole class, a lack of support and challenge from adults means that most pupils do less well than they could, including the most able.
- Teachers do not always adapt lessons well enough if pupils struggle to keep up or find the work too easy. During lessons, adults frequently overlook basic errors in spelling, poor handwriting or number formation.
- The effect which teaching assistants have on pupils' learning varies considerably. When teachers give support staff good information about what is planned for the lesson, and when assistants have well-developed professional skills, they make a good impact on learning. However, teaching assistants do not always know what to do or how to help.
- Until recently, teachers' marking and feedback to pupils did not make enough difference to their progress. Now teachers mark work carefully, telling pupils what to do to improve. Pupils say they look forward to reading these comments. In some classes, pupils are helpfully given time to think about and reply to their teacher's feedback.
- Teachers set relevant homework and suitable books are provided so that pupils can practise their reading at home. The school has recently extended its book collection to provide a wider choice, and initial steps have been taken to develop a library for the juniors. Parents of Reception children are able to place a sticker in their child's learning journal saying, 'Did you know I can do this?', when their child demonstrates a new skill at home.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils' attainment and progress are not consistently good and the school is not ensuring all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- During Years 1 and 2, pupils do not all make the good progress they need to in order to make up for the lower than expected attainment of many when they leave the Reception year. As a result, too few reach or exceed the expected levels in reading, writing or mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Between Year 3 and Year 6, pupils do not make consistently good progress either. In some years, pupils make good progress in reading, writing or mathematics, only to slip back again later. This is due to the variable teaching that has prevailed in the school.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 is beginning to improve, although this is not strong enough for all pupils or in all subjects. In 2014, at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in the writing assessments rose to be above the national average for the first time in three years. However, this was not matched by pupils' attainment in the spelling and grammar test, which declined compared with 2013. In reading, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected level declined. Pupils in Year 6 in 2014, made more progress in mathematics

during Key Stage 2 than previous Year 6 pupils. Even so, the proportion who achieved the expected level in mathematics declined.

- The achievement of the most able pupils is getting better. For example, in 2014 more Year 6 pupils than previously attained the higher levels in the mathematics and reading tests, and in the writing assessment.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium attain less than their peers from a young age, and do not make enough progress to catch up. At the end of Year 2 in 2014, these pupils trailed their peers in the school by more than a term in reading and mathematics, and by almost a term in writing. Year 6 pupils in this group left the school nearly five terms behind in reading, and around three and a half terms behind in writing and mathematics, when compared with pupils nationally in 2013 who were not entitled to free school meals
- The school's Gypsy Roma pupils achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2, as do pupils who speak English as an additional language. Last year most of these pupils made at least the expected progress, and some made more than this.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. In 2014, all the pupils in this group in Year 6 had made the expected progress during Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics, and a significant proportion made more. Half these pupils made the expected progress or more in reading.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because children's learning varies too much from year to year. Consequently, too many children enter Year 1 without the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for a good start in Key Stage 1.
- Good work this year to improve the recording of children's progress reflects improvements in the leadership of this phase. This information shows that Reception children make the weakest progress in the aspects of their learning which focus on reading, writing and mathematics.
- A higher than usual proportion of pupils enters the school with disabilities, special educational needs, or with low levels of earlier learning. Targeted support for these children enables many to make good progress in some areas of learning, but their low start means they still do not always achieve a good level of development.
- Teachers plan a full range of engaging activities inside and outside. However, the effectiveness of adults supporting children doing these activities varies too much. For example, an adult patiently supported a child with communication and emotional difficulties during a game of skittles in order to develop the child's ability to count. In another instance, the way the adult used a pile of dice to help children count items was not helpful as the spots on the dice confused their learning.
- Children in Reception learn to behave well. At the start of the year, they are introduced into the class a few at a time, so every child receives the attention they need. Partnership working with parents is good. Parents trust and respect the staff. They enjoy being able to see their child's 'learning journal' and making contributions to this at home.
- The early years environment is a safe place.

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	125958
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	449244

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Spencer
Headteacher	Yasmin Ashraf
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 March 2011
Telephone number	01444 246532
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