

South Bersted C of E Primary School

Church Lane, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 9PZ

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2015

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

- Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is not yet good. Teaching over time has not been good enough to enable pupils to achieve well.
- Teachers mostly do not provide work that meets pupils' needs well enough, particularly for the most able, who are not fully challenged in lessons.
- Teachers' questioning does not always deepen pupils' understanding and teachers' feedback is not always specific enough to help pupils improve their work.
- Presentation and handwriting at Key Stage 2 are untidy and often careless.
- In the early years, provision for activities that the children undertake by themselves is not stimulating enough or sufficiently well planned to enable children to achieve well.
- Planning and provision for reading are not always effective enough to ensure key skills are developed well. In writing, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length, and in mathematics pupils do not get enough opportunities to set out their own work to develop their own ideas and methods.
- Leaders, managers and governors, but particularly previous senior leaders, have not taken the need for significant improvement seriously enough. Consequently, until very recently, teaching and achievement had not improved.
- Middle leaders have not been sufficiently involved in supporting and challenging their colleagues or checking information on pupils' progress to enable rapid improvement.
- School improvement planning and the use of information on pupils' progress are not yet focused enough to ensure rapid improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher provides strong, effective leadership that has energised staff, pupils and governors, and fully engaged parents. All speak highly of his positive impact on all of the school's work.
- Robust systems are now in place to improve teaching, learning and achievement, which are beginning to accelerate.
- Pupils behave well and the school provides a very safe place for them to learn.
- Children make good progress in reading, writing and number in the early years due to well-planned, focused teaching in these areas.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 17 lessons or part lessons, of which one was jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher and other senior staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 52 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also spoke to several parents when they brought their children to school. The inspectors considered responses to the 22 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including: the school's own information on pupils' current progress; planning and checks on the quality of teaching; assessment; the new curriculum; the school's self-evaluation; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the sport premium action plan; and, documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6.

Inspection team

Janet Sinclair, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- South Bersted is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are looked after or are known to be eligible for free school meals) is average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is below average. A good proportion of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English when they start school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Children attend the Reception class full time.
- There is an on-site breakfast club.
- The substantive headteacher retired in December 2014. The new headteacher took up his post in January 2015. The deputy headteacher resigned in April 2015. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed for September 2015. Additionally, there have been several teaching staff changes since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that :
 - questioning enables pupils to answer fully and deepens their understanding
 - work challenges pupils, particularly the most able
 - feedback tells pupils more clearly what they need to do to improve and ensures they respond in a way that moves their learning on.
 - teaching assistants help pupils to work independently
- Improve pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring reading sessions are consistently well planned so that all pupils develop their reading skills effectively
 - improving presentation and handwriting at Key Stage 2 and providing opportunities for pupils to write at length, both in literacy lessons and across subjects generally
 - ensuring pupils have more opportunities to set out their work independently in mathematics so they develop their own ideas and methods.
- Improve the early years provision through:
 - stimulating well-planned activities across all areas of learning that engage children fully
 - adult involvement that challenges children and extends their knowledge and understanding.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - school improvement plans focus on the key areas for improvement, and expected outcomes are measurable so success can be checked
 - data is used more effectively to accelerate pupils' rates of progress
 - middle leaders are more involved in ensuring consistency of practice and know how well pupils are doing in order to move learning on quickly.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- Until recently, senior leaders were ineffective in bringing about the required improvement in achievement, teaching and learning. Staffing issues and changes have continued to disrupt learning.
- There is a detailed school improvement plan in place. However, it does not focus sufficiently on the key tasks needed to bring about rapid improvement in pupils' achievement nor clear outcomes that can be accurately measured. This limits its usefulness as a tool for improvement.
- The new headteacher provides strong, empowering leadership that has energised all staff, so that they are working together to bring about improvement in pupils' performance. As one senior leader commented, 'There is now accountability within the school.' There is greater thoroughness in all of the school's work, positive parental support, a new commitment by all staff and an improving picture in terms of achievement, teaching and pupils' behaviour and safety. This shows the school has the capacity for further improvement. Staff say that they are 'united with a greater shared vision'.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to their roles, have been well supported, both by the local authority and new senior leaders, to bring about improvements in their areas of responsibility. They all have action plans and some 'green shoots' are already showing. For example, there is improved reading and phonic (the sounds and names of letters) sessions, and the application of skills in mathematics. However, they are not yet fully effective in supporting their colleagues to ensure consistency of practice, or sufficiently knowledgeable about the data to provide effective guidance on improvement. They say that there is 'lots more support for middle leaders now'.
- In the past, checks on teaching and learning have been irregular. The new headteacher has instigated regular, robust checks on teaching and learning so that staff are very clear about what they need to improve their teaching.
- The process for setting targets for staff linked to their pay now has much higher expectations for staff already on the higher pay scales. Staff are clear that they need to improve their teaching, ensure pupils in their class achieve well and fulfil their wider responsibilities fully. Staff spoken to were pleased that there were more regular reviews and clear expectations for their performance.
- Tracking of pupils' progress has been the task of senior leadership, with little staff involvement. More robust and regular systems have been put in place, with teachers now being held accountable for the progress of pupils in their class. This is providing greater equality of opportunity for pupils and helping to tackle any discrimination, as all pupils are tracked carefully and support is given to ensure they do not fall behind. This is also helping to improve relationships across the school.
- The special educational needs coordinator ensures pupils who attract the pupil premium funding are given the right support through targeted provision and regular follow up. Pupils get help in class, play therapy and counselling, if needed, and attend breakfast club. This is helping to close the gaps between their performance and other pupils in the school.
- The school uses the primary sport premium well. Staff receive training and pupils have sports coaching. The school is part of a local schools partnership which provides sporting competitions. All of these help to provide longer term benefits for pupils and improved staff expertise.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies, in particular, play a pivotal role in pupils' spiritual development. They provide special occasions that are valued by all pupils. Pupils know right from wrong, and get on well together. They learn about British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain through learning about Magna Carta, holding junior governor elections and reflecting on heroes such as the Queen and Florence Nightingale.
- The new curriculum covers a broad range of subjects and clearly sets out what has to be taught in each year group. It ensures appropriate coverage of English and mathematics. Other subjects are covered through topics such as 'The Egyptians' and environmental issues such as the effect of human activity in the world's rainforests. There are a good number of visits, visitors, and school clubs that enrich the curriculum.
- Parents are very positive about the impact of the new headteacher. They appreciate the warm welcome, the support that children with special educational needs get and the parents' forum where they can bring any concerns.
- The local authority has provided on-going, regular support to the school since its previous inspection. This has included guidance for middle leaders and enabled some improvements in provision for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has very robust systems in place to safeguard pupils which fully meet statutory requirements. They are implemented thoroughly at all levels.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have fully embraced the opportunity to be much more involved in the work of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties well, have undertaken an audit and have monthly governor meetings so that all governors are up to speed with all aspects of the school. Governors have a regular schedule of visits to the school so they know what is going on. They know how effective teaching is because the headteacher informs them, they check for themselves through their regular visits, and the local authority provides reports for them. They are beginning to get a clearer view of pupils' progress as, in addition to published data which they check carefully, the school is starting to provide them with more regular information on pupils' progress. They monitor the headteacher's performance and know that there is a similar process in place for all staff. They check staff performance carefully to ensure they have met the criteria for an increase in pay. All salary increases are signed off by the governors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons, at breaktimes and around the school. Pupils' outstanding behaviour in assemblies reflects the value pupils place on Assemblies.
- There is a clear behaviour policy and any trends in behaviour are carefully analysed and addressed where needed. Pupils are fully aware of the sanctions that apply, such as warnings and detentions, if they misbehave. They all like the golden points they get for good behaviour, but not the 'dojos' for bad behaviour. Pupils say that there are only minor fall outs at playtimes, and some calling out in lessons.
- Pupils mainly have good attitudes to their learning and behave well. However, their behaviour overall is not outstanding because, occasionally, when lessons do not engage them, they become fidgety and lose interest.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as being eco representatives, school councillors and monitors, and are pleased that they help others in school.
- Pupils know what bullying is as they have had anti-bullying talks. They are aware of the different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying and name calling. The school council is involved in checking on any suspected bullying so that it does not develop. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare and if it does occur it is dealt with quickly by staff.
- Attendance is broadly average. The school has recently tightened up procedures to improve punctuality, which have been very successful.
- The breakfast club provides a good start to the day for pupils. They enjoy a hearty breakfast, have a range of activities to enjoy and are looked after well by staff.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They are confident that adults will take good care of them and respond positively to any concerns they have.
- They learn about how to stay safe through, for example, cycling training, and presentations on personal safety from visitors such as those from Childline. They are taught how to use the internet safely and know the importance of regular fire drills. The visit from the Life Bus informs pupils about health and safety issues.
- The school takes good care of its disadvantaged pupils through additional support in school and the use of outside specialists, if needed.
- Parents are very happy with the measures in place to keep their children safe and the school's emphasis on good behaviour.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement, as teaching over time has not been good enough to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not always provide work at the right level for pupils. It is not always challenging enough for the most able and is sometimes too difficult for the least able.
- Although teachers question pupils, they do not regularly do so in a way that deepens their thinking or encourages a detailed response. This limits its effectiveness in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding.

- Teachers' feedback to pupils is not always regular enough. It does not clearly tell pupils what they need to do to improve or ensure they respond in a way that helps to improve their work.
- Teachers plan and organise lessons well. They have good relationships with pupils that encourage good behaviour and a positive attitude to their learning.
- Teaching assistants are encouraging and supportive of pupils, particularly those who are disabled or have special educational needs. However, they are sometimes too quick to tell children what to do or how to do it. This stops pupils from working independently and slows their overall progress.
- Teachers provide regular reading sessions for pupils. The English leader has introduced a more thorough approach to the teaching of key skills and comprehension. However, this is not being used by all staff and so not all pupils are benefiting from it. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they get to read, both in literacy lessons and through regular reading homework. Improved teaching of phonics is also helping pupils' reading skills, as was noted when pupils in Year 2 read to the inspector.
- Pupils get regular opportunities to write within their literacy lessons. However, they have fewer opportunities to write at length, especially across other subjects. Additionally, at Key Stage 2, there is not enough attention paid to handwriting and presentation, which is often untidy.
- Teachers develop pupils' calculation and measuring skills well in mathematics, and are beginning to encourage the use of logic and reasoning. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to set out their own work independently, and this limits their ability to develop their own ideas and methods.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs get effective support for their specific needs, and are appropriately supported within the class.
- Teachers mostly do not provide the most able pupils with challenging activities at the start of lessons, but more as an add on, and this slows their progress and leads to some frustration.
- Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by outside agencies, and have bilingual support in school that helps them to develop their speaking skills in English.
- Pupils have regular homework in reading and number, as well as well as a half-termly curriculum task that ends with an exhibition, for example an exhibition of 'spectacular stories'.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement has not been good enough over time. It is beginning to accelerate as a result of the more robust systems that are now in place.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 was average in 2014, and progress was broadly in line with what would be typically expected. It is set to be similar again this year. The school has worked hard to address some residual underachievement for this year group as a result of weak teaching when they were in Year 5. Some weaknesses remain, particularly for writing at the higher Level 5.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is broadly average due to their not making fast enough progress.
- Pupils across the rest of the school mainly make steady, and sometimes good, progress given their starting points.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English receive additional support that enables them to make progress similar to other pupils in the school. Specific support is good, but in-class support is not so effective.
- The most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in lessons to enable them to make good progress. Too often they have to complete tasks that are below their levels of ability before moving on to suitably challenging work. This slows their progress.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 was over two terms behind other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and over one term behind in writing. Pupils' attainment was similar to other pupils in the school in writing and mathematics and lower in reading. Their current achievement is similar to other pupils in the school, given their starting points, so the gap has almost closed. Pupils are clearly identified, get support in class and additional one-to-one support for reading, where needed. This is helping to accelerate their progress and close the gaps between them and other pupils nationally. Additionally, pastoral support, such as breakfast club and play therapy, helps them to engage in their learning more productively.
- Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics requires improvement, but is improving as a result of improved provision, a better focus on effective teaching and a clearer understanding of pupils' progress.

The early years provision requires improvement

- Children enter school with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. They make good progress in their reading, writing and use of number due to focused teaching of these skills, so that they are close to the national level by the end of the year. They make expected progress across all the other areas of learning. Just over half of them achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception. Consequently, they are not all sufficiently well prepared for the start of Year 1.
- Teaching overall does not provide sufficient stimulation or challenge to enable children to make good progress across the areas of learning. Focused teaching of key skills in reading, writing and number enables children to achieve well in these areas.
- The regular teaching of phonics helps children to use these skills well to help with their reading and writing. For example, children were seen demonstrating a good knowledge of initial sounds and the ability to write simple sentences and blend letters together to make simple words.
- Activities that children choose by themselves do not provide enough stimulation or challenge to develop their skills well. Staff questioning of children does not challenge them or take their learning on effectively. This is because planning for these activities does not give enough guidance on what the children are expected to learn.
- Children mainly engage well in the activities on offer; but, sometimes, when activities do not engage them, they wander around aimlessly.
- Children behave well, cooperate with each other, share resources and are friendly and helpful. Staff ensure that the children are kept safe and children move around the classroom and outdoor area in a safe manner.
- Regular assessment of children's learning is recorded fully in their learning journals. Additional support is given, where needed, for example through enabling children to take part in memory games and social skills groups.
- There are good links with parents, who come in to school on a weekly basis to share their children's learning. They also contribute to their children's learning journals.
- Leadership requires improvement. Although it enables some good progress, but does not ensure exciting and challenging experiences for children across the areas of learning.

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	125973
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	462355

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

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Starkey
Headteacher	Chris Kronda
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 July 2013
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