

South Bersted Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO22 9PZ

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has brought about rapid change for the better. Staff share the senior leaders' vision for the school and, as a result, the school is continuing to improve.
- Leaders are persistent with their commitment to place pupils' well-being at the heart of this inclusive school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils talk knowledgeably about how they can show care and respect for others.
- Teaching is typically good through the school. Teachers plan purposeful lessons so that pupils learn well. However, planned tasks for the most able pupils are sometimes not demanding enough, especially in mathematics.
- From their different starting points, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some pupils do not use their writing skills to full effect when tackling extended pieces of work.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the well-planned support they receive.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This enables them to ask searching questions and challenge leaders to make further improvements.
- The curriculum is well designed and captures pupils' imagination. It is underpinned strongly by core values including respect, nurture and wonder.
- Pupils behave well. They feel very safe in school and attendance levels are above average. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils feel valued and secure.
- The early years provision is well managed. Children settle well and make good progress.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. They are actively involved in their children's education.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide sufficient challenge for pupils in lessons, especially the most able, so that pupils make the progress of which they are capable
 - pupils apply their English skills fully to extended writing tasks
 - teachers provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills so that a greater proportion achieve the higher level in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead well. Their drive to raise standards, coupled with good-quality training and development of staff, has brought about rapid improvements to teaching and accelerated pupils' progress. A collaborative team spirit pervades all aspects of the school's work. This ensures that the school meets its aim of providing a 'supportive yet challenging learning environment where each learner is happy and enabled to reach their full potential'.
- The headteacher has been effective in changing the culture of the school for the better. Central to the school's vision is providing a 'safe and nurturing environment'. Adults are positive examples as they show empathy, respect and kindness. A pupil described the school as 'one community, which is happy, caring and amazing'.
- At the heart of the school's highly positive and nurturing ethos is a commitment that all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve success. Staff and pupils do not tolerate discrimination of any sort. Additional funding is used effectively to support pupils who have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff morale is high. There is a strong sense of teamwork because all staff, whatever their role, feel valued and know that they are working towards the same goals. In the online staff questionnaire, 100% of staff agreed that the school is well led and managed and that they are proud to be a member of South Bersted. One staff member typified the views of many saying, 'Leaders and staff are not complacent about the progress and attainment of pupils and are all keen to do their best for the children at our school.'
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. School development planning, including the school's short-term rapid improvement plan is effective. It enables school leaders to prioritise and act upon aspects that require urgent attention.
- The school's curriculum meets pupils' needs well. It provides a good range of quality activities that promote pupils' enjoyment and a love of learning. This broad and balanced range of activities enables pupils to develop their basic skills well, including in numeracy and literacy.
- Middle leaders are effective in their roles. Senior leaders ensure that they receive good support and training, including opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning. They know the main strengths of the school and its areas for development, and are fully involved in the creation of the school improvement plans.
- There is a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils appreciate and value differences.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils know about and demonstrate the key values of tolerance and respect. They develop a good understanding of other faiths and beliefs. This is reinforced in assemblies and opportunities to reflect about issues in lessons. Pupils have a clear knowledge of democracy and put this into practice through elections to become 'junior governors'.

- The school generally uses pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils' needs are met and any barriers to their learning are overcome. However, in 2016, disadvantaged pupils achieved less well than other pupils nationally. This year, those currently in the school are making better progress.
- The school uses primary physical education and sports funding effectively. Leaders provide a wide range of sports and physical activities, including athletics, basketball and gymnastics. Pupils enjoy sport, and participation in sport is high in the school.
- Parents are very positive about the school. They expressed every confidence in the leadership. One parent wrote: 'The school is incredibly nurturing and caring. It is strongly led by the headteacher; a real asset to the school who instils pride in the children.'
- The school's breakfast club is well led and managed. It provides a safe and nurturing start to the school day. This provision has helped improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- The school has a good relationship with the local authority and diocese. Leaders have benefited from well-targeted challenge and support. This has been particularly useful in helping to improve the quality of teaching and subject leadership.

Governance of the school

- Since the previous inspection, governors have taken steps to ensure that they are better organised and equipped to check on the school's work effectively. They know how well the school is doing in comparison to national standards. They provide a high level of challenge and are ambitious for the school's future success.
- Governors know about the quality of teaching because the headteacher keeps them well informed. They visit the school regularly and know what leaders are doing to improve the quality of teaching and eradicate any weaker practice.
- The governors are knowledgeable about the performance of staff. They understand the link between teachers' pay and performance. Governors wisely make sure that money is available for the training needs identified by the headteacher.
- Governors have a good understanding of how the pupil premium and the school sport premium funding are spent and the positive impact of both funding streams on pupils. They make sure that they remain effective by attending training and sharing learning with each other.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has created a school culture in which safeguarding is of paramount importance to ensure the welfare of pupils. All staff attend regular safeguarding training and know how to keep pupils safe. Members of the governing body attend training to make sure that they are well informed. The school deals sensitively with parents and families that may need extra support and advice. There are effective relationships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Visits to lessons and work seen in pupils' books show that the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills has improved and is consistently good.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and, as a result, pupils work hard, are willing to take risks and want to do well. Pupils are confident to ask if they do not understand, because they know staff will help them.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Improvements to the teaching of phonics ensure that pupils develop key skills quickly. The school promotes pupils' enjoyment of reading well.
- Where teachers' expectations are high and they insist on the highest standards, pupils respond well. In some classes, this is not a consistent feature and pupils need to be reminded to focus on the task in hand.
- The teaching of writing has generally improved. Pupils cover a range of writing styles and their writing skills are developed progressively. Pupils learn how to use the correct grammar and develop other skills through appropriate activities completed during English lessons. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they are not applying their skills fully to more extended tasks.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved and is providing greater challenge through the development of tasks, including reasoning and problem-solving activities. There are signs that this is having a good impact on pupils' achievement. Nonetheless, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in a variety of ways in subjects other than in mathematics. Work in books demonstrates that pupils occasionally complete work which has not made them think hard enough about their learning.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and particularly effective in supporting disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in, and benefit from, all classroom activities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Staff cultivate extremely supportive relationships with the pupils. They support these confidence-boosting relationships with very high levels of pastoral care. There is a strong sense of community, firmly based on the school's Christian values.
- All parents agree that their children feel safe, happy and well looked after at school. Pupils have a very clear sense of belonging and this is because school leaders have developed a climate that helps nurture and celebrate vulnerable pupils and their achievements.

- Pupils show a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and say that bullying is rare in their school. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about how to stay safe, including fire safety, road safety and safely using the internet.
- Staff training in child protection and safeguarding issues is highly effective. Pupils say confidently that they are exceptionally well looked after and there is always someone with whom to share a problem.
- School staff work highly effectively and relentlessly with external agencies to support pupils and their families. Staff work very closely with vulnerable pupils to provide exceptionally strong support to them through difficulties when they occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The headteacher has worked hard to establish a purposeful learning environment. One parent said that the headteacher has 'made a significant impact over the last two years'.
- Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, for example when acting as 'peer mentors' to organise activities during playtimes and promoting respect and equality within their community.
- Attendance levels are above the national average. Pupils enjoy going to school, with pupils saying the school is 'incredible, fabulous and brilliant'. The school has good procedures in place to check attendance and challenge and reduce persistent absence.
- Pupils, parents, teachers and governors are rightly of the view that behaviour is good. The school's behaviour logs show that behaviour is typically good over time.
- Lessons are rarely disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Occasionally, when pupils do not have sufficient challenge, they are less attentive and do not listen as well as they could.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current assessment information indicates that pupils in most year groups make good progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Leaders rigorously monitor the progress of all pupils and this helps them to intervene and help pupils catch up if they fall behind.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, make good progress. They achieve well and in line with their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders use assessment information wisely to ensure that the standards these pupils achieve do not slip behind those of others.
- The proportion of pupils in the early years who reached a good level of development in 2016 was in line with the national average. This was a significant improvement on their achievement in 2015.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 is improving steadily and in 2016 was close to the national average. Teachers have improved the teaching of reading and the vast majority of pupils are currently making better progress in reading.

- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points in key stage 1. In 2016, pupils attained in line with age-related expectations for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils in key stage 2 who achieved the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics was below national figures. By the end of Year 6 the most able pupils do not always achieve the higher levels they are capable of. This is because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough.
- One of the key reasons why 2016 key stage 2 pupils did not make better progress was due to inadequate teaching in the past. This has been successfully tackled by the headteacher but gaps in pupils' learning remained and their progress did not match that of pupils nationally. This legacy of underperformance meant that some pupils who left in 2016 were not as well prepared as they should have been for their next stage of education.
- Parents are positive about the progress their children now make and feel the school provides them with useful information about their children's progress.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Those who speak English as an additional language, particularly those at an early stage of English, also achieve well as they have effective support from teachers and bilingual staff.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good gains from their starting points. This is because their needs are accurately identified and they are provided with appropriate support to help them overcome their difficulties.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years was identified as an area for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. It is now a strength of the school.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader has a good understanding of how children learn and develop. There is a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those which the children choose themselves. Children make good progress in the early years and achieve well.
- At the time of the last inspection, children's skills on entry to the Reception Year were assessed to be below those typical for their age. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established rigorous new assessment systems which now accurately show that children enter the school with skills and abilities well below those which are typical.
- Children enjoy positive relationships with each other and with staff. This, together with their good behaviour, ensures that they feel safe.
- Teachers plan learning that interests children and promotes the secure development of their basic skills. Consequently, children develop their writing and mathematics skills well. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education in Year 1.
- Staff work closely with parents and communicate well with them. Parents are very supportive and during conversations with inspectors expressed their confidence in the staff.

- Arrangements for safeguarding children are effective and reviewed regularly. All welfare requirements are met. Leaders work well with external agencies to support vulnerable children.

School details

Unique reference number	125973
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10032842

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Starkey
Headteacher	Chris Kronda
Telephone number	01243 821678
Website	www.southbersted.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@southbersted.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 June 2015

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Just over one fifth of pupils are from 'other White' backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, as is the proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school part-way through their primary education is higher than usual.
- There have been changes to leadership recently with the appointment of a new deputy headteacher.

- Early years children are taught in one Reception class. They all attend full time.
- There is an on-site breakfast club.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 19 lessons; all of which were joint observations with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, and pupils' work in books.
- Discussions took place with several groups of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lessons and at playtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- Meetings were held with school staff, eight members of the governing body, and parents and carers.
- Inspectors took into consideration 26 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 43 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors took into account 62 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Donovan

Ofsted Inspector

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