

Sidlesham Primary School

Keynor Lane, Sidlesham, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 7NL

Inspection dates

20–21 November 2018

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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' effective actions have halted a decline in standards since the last inspection. The new headteacher and his team are building successfully on the school's existing strengths.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They respond well to teachers' clear and high expectations. They make effective use of adults' support, which ensures they know how to improve. As a result, pupils are currently making good progress.
- Teachers plan learning that develops pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding successfully over time. The most able pupils are not routinely challenged as much as they could be.
- Leaders keep a careful check on standards of teaching in the school. They hold staff to account for the difference their work makes to pupils' achievements. They ensure that training and support for staff are timely and useful.
- Pupils enjoy a suitably broad curriculum that takes advantage of the school's rural setting. Leaders keep the curriculum under review and aspire to enhance it further. Recent improvements to sports provision are welcomed by pupils and parents and carers alike.
- Children enjoy their experience in early years. New leaders are working effectively to develop the quality of provision further. They work closely with parents to ensure that children's learning needs are met promptly.
- Pupils are kind and thoughtful. Almost all behave extremely well. The very small number with more challenging behaviour are increasingly positive in their responses. This is because their needs are met carefully and sensitively by adults.
- Leaders' actions have successfully improved pupils' rates of attendance, which are now above average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is declining over time.
- Governors have strengthened their work in recent times. Collectively, they have suitable skills and experience for their role. Governors' renewed challenge to leaders is effective in supporting ongoing school improvement.
- Pupils have not made consistently strong progress since they joined the school. Consequently, they do not currently achieve as well as they should by the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils' progress has improved in recent months and is now good. This is helping them to catch up from their underperformance in the past.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes further, so that:
 - pupils make consistently strong progress from their starting points
 - disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils nationally
 - the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) moves closer towards that of other pupils nationally
 - standards in writing meet those currently achieved in reading and mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching challenges the most able pupils to achieve as well as they should.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Parents trust staff and leaders to do the very best for their children. They recognise the school's many strengths and its emerging improvements. One described leaders as 'keeping the good stuff and building on it'. The vast majority of parents responding to the online questionnaire, Parent View, expressed highly positive views about the school.
- Leaders are addressing historic weaknesses in pupils' academic achievement with determination and rigour. They recognise that a number of complex issues linked to staffing have destabilised the school since the last successful inspection in 2015. Since his arrival in September 2018, the headteacher has built successfully on the firm foundations laid by the preceding interim headteacher. As a result, pupils' outcomes have already risen.
- Staff and governors demonstrate a shared resolve to return the school to the high standards evident at the last inspection. A clear focus on the identified priorities – 'The Big 3' – guides their work successfully. The impact of their ongoing work and dedication is evident throughout the school.
- Leaders make careful checks on the quality of teaching, looking carefully at the difference it makes to pupils' learning. Useful systems identify priorities for training and development across the curriculum, which are acted on swiftly. Staff learn effectively from each other and are supported well by their links with local school networks. Collaborative work with a local teaching school alliance is in its infancy.
- The school's use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has recently been refined. It now focuses closely on the difference it makes to pupils' academic achievements. Leaders and governors track the impact of this funding carefully, adapting how money is spent. Disadvantaged pupils are subsequently making better progress than in the past, although they are yet to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with SEND are supported appropriately. Staff have a clear understanding of pupils' learning and emotional needs. External help is accessed in a timely way. Consequently, pupils are safe, well cared for and able to access the curriculum successfully. They are beginning to close the achievement gap with their peers in school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils experience a curriculum that is engaging and motivating and makes the most of the school's facilities and grounds. Subject leaders monitor the quality of provision well, using what they learn to support ongoing training and support. Leaders' work to refine the curriculum is ongoing, using subject leaders' strengths and areas of expertise increasingly well.
- Pupils value the wider experiences that enhance their learning and teach them about the world around them. They have useful opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions, and to contribute to their local and school communities. They are proud to represent their school, for example by participating in the Young Voices event at the O2 Arena.

- A renewed focus on sports provision has raised the profile of physical activity in the school. Consequently, pupils participate enthusiastically in a range of sporting activities, in lessons, during social times, and via local competitions. They access a wider range of sports than in the past, using new equipment respectfully and practising vital skills such as resilience and cooperation. They enjoy learning outdoors as part of 'Welly Wednesday'.

Governance of the school

- The governing body recognises that it did not act decisively enough in the past when standards in the school started to slip. Governors' honest reflections have enabled them to strengthen their work, with useful support from the local authority, interim headteacher and new headteacher.
- Governors have evolved helpful systems that enable them to challenge leaders successfully about the impact of their work. This is contributing effectively to the school's journey of ongoing improvement. For example, governors' challenge has helped to refine the school's use of additional funding, so that it now leads more directly to improvements in the areas for which it is intended.
- Members of the governing body contribute a useful range of expertise and experience to their work. Governors make good use of support and training, including from the local authority, which is developing their understanding and effectiveness. They understand their legal duties, such as in relation to safeguarding, and are diligent in carrying them out.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors have a well-developed understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Training is relevant and timely and gives staff the confidence to act on any concerns they may have about a pupil. Leaders make careful checks to ensure that there are no gaps in understanding, and that staff are supported well in managing any issues that arise.
- Leaders understand the importance of the 'big picture' of safeguarding around any individual pupil. Their useful systems enable them to identify promptly where a pupil or family may be vulnerable or at risk of harm. Consequently, leaders liaise appropriately with experts from beyond the school to provide extra support where it is needed. This helps pupils to feel safe and well cared for.
- Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about relevant issues, such as internet awareness and managing risks when away from school. Almost all pupils said that they feel confident that an adult would help them if a situation was making them feel unsafe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils learn well across the curriculum because of the consistently good-quality teaching they experience. Across the school, they work purposefully, responding well to adults' high expectations of what they can and should achieve. Well-established routines enable pupils to make good use of learning time in class.
- Effective relationships help pupils and adults to work well together. Consequently, pupils who might otherwise become distracted or disruptive remain focused on their learning. This aids their progress, as well as that of others.
- Teachers plan work that helps pupils to build successfully on their prior knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to persevere when they get 'stuck', finding their own solutions or sharing expertise with their peers. Resources and the classroom environment are used purposefully to complement questions and information from adults.
- Pupils approach their work with enthusiasm and diligence. Their sense of pride is evident in the careful presentation of their work. They willingly revisit their work to improve it, taking helpful advice not only from adults but also from each other. However, where pupils' use of complex vocabulary lacks accuracy, they do not systematically check whether they are spelling words correctly.
- Phonics is taught well. In early years, children participate enthusiastically and develop their knowledge securely. Moving into Year 1, adults structure pupils' learning carefully to ensure that they develop secure phonic skills over time. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1 is increasing towards the national average.
- Pupils develop their reading skills well. Adults encourage them to read widely, accessing suitably challenging texts. Pupils use their phonics skills to grapple with and decipher unfamiliar words. They enjoy choosing books from the well-stocked library and sharing the role of librarian.
- Pupils receive homework that is relevant to their stage of learning. They say that they find it helpful. Parents are similarly positive about how homework is useful and how it complements their children's learning at school.
- The school's new methods of assessment help teachers to build a clear and accurate picture of what pupils can and cannot do. However, teachers do not routinely use what they know to plan next steps in learning as precisely as they could, or to move learning on at the appropriate time. Consequently, some pupils, especially the most able, are not challenged as much as they could be to reach a greater depth of learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils demonstrate a real sense of maturity when thinking about and responding to each other's needs. They are thoughtful and considered in their approach to those around them. As a result, everyone in the school community feels safe and valued.
- Staff know pupils well, and cater successfully for their welfare needs. Pupils and parents really value this level of care. When asked what they were most proud of about their school, several pupils said that adults are kind to them. Parents appreciate how school leaders take time to listen and respond to their views, such as through the current trial of extended breakfast and after-school care.
- Pupils are keen to be involved in the ongoing development of the school. Leaders ensure that pupils have useful opportunities to contribute their views and take on responsibilities, such as via the eco-schools and young governors' groups. Pupils recently contributed to developing the school's rewards scheme, focusing on how their successes could be recognised in a way that invests back into the life of the school.
- Pupils understand bullying in an age-appropriate way. Most feel that bullying rarely happens in their school, but that it is dealt with well by adults if it does occur. Almost all parents and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys support this view. A very small minority of pupils expressed concerns about unkind behaviour that they considered to be bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils conduct themselves very well in lessons and around the school. Behaviour is managed well by adults.
- Useful systems help leaders to monitor pupils' behaviour closely and identify emerging issues quickly. This enables them to act successfully to address or pre-empt patterns of less positive behaviour. Consequently, instances of poor behaviour are low and declining over time, and exclusions are rare.
- Leaders' recent actions have improved pupils' attendance considerably. Absence rates are now below average. Although persistent absence remains high, it is reducing over time. Leaders work successfully with help from beyond the school to support families where pupils' absence is too high.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, pupils' outcomes have declined. In 2018, almost all published measures show pupils' achievements to be below average. While some measures, such as attainment at the expected standard in writing at key stage 2, improved from the previous year, others showed a downward trend. Leaders and governors identify clearly and honestly that pupils have not achieved as well as they should have in recent years.
- Most pupils are currently making good progress across their range of subjects. Their work shows pupils tackling appropriately challenging tasks, writing with increasing sophistication and developing their mathematical understanding well. However, even where recent progress is convincing, some pupils are not improving quickly enough to make up for their underperformance in the past.

- The proportion of pupils who are on track to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is increasing, especially across key stage 2. Year 6 pupils, in particular, are building effectively on their strong attainment at the end of key stage 1, with high proportions working at least at an age-appropriate standard.
- Standards in writing across key stage 2 are currently too low, and lower than those being reached in reading and mathematics. Attainment in writing is better in Year 1, but remains below expected levels.
- The school has a relatively small number of disadvantaged pupils. Some are making very strong progress, but others are improving more gradually. Consequently, although disadvantaged pupils are closing the gap with their peers in school, they are not currently attaining as well as other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with SEND are responding well to closely targeted extra help. This is increasing their attainment over time. It is not clear whether their current pace of improvement is sufficient to enable them to catch up sufficiently with other pupils.
- Outcomes in phonics are improving over time. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2018 improved considerably from 2017, but remained below the national average. Leaders' work to strengthen the quality of phonics teaching is proving successful in supporting ongoing improvements in this area of the school's work.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in early years are happy and well cared for. They interact confidently with each other, playing well together as well as by themselves. They respond positively to the adults around them, who help to keep them safe.
- The early years leaders are new to their posts. They have established themselves quickly and are ambitious to improve the setting further. Their shared understanding of the quality of provision enables them to identify priorities for improvement accurately. At this early stage of their tenure, the impact of their work is just beginning to emerge, but is building on existing strengths in early years.
- Leaders have evolved their work with families and nurseries to support children's transition into early years. Their understanding of children's interests and needs enables them to adapt the curriculum appropriately. Consequently, children settle quickly into the school, enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Children are introduced successfully to reading and writing. They participate enthusiastically in phonics sessions and develop a secure understanding of letters and sounds. Most enjoy practising their writing, which is linked to their wider learning. For example, during the inspection, several children were writing a letter to 'Superworm' about their outdoor learning the previous day. They formed their letters carefully and took great pride in their writing.
- Staff understand children's personal, social and emotional needs. They encourage children to learn healthy behaviours, such as hand-washing, and to make sensible food choices at snack time. Staff ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding are met, in line with the rest of the school.

- Leaders make effective use of training and support to develop further their understanding of early years, and adapt the provision as a result. For example, they have reorganised the learning environment to provide greater opportunities for children to write. Their work to develop the outside space is ongoing and determined.
- Adults interact well with children and ask useful questions to prompt their thinking and capture their imagination. They do not always target their work with those children who are most at risk of falling behind.
- Children achieve well during early years. Over time, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has improved notably and was above the national average in 2018. Consequently, children are increasingly well prepared for their key stage 1 learning. Work from children currently in early years shows them to be developing their pencil control and basic number recognition successfully since the start of term. The most able children access suitably challenging work.

School details

Unique reference number	125853
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10054951

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Malcolm Foster
Headteacher	Mr Mike Wood
Telephone number	01243 641238
Website	www.sidleshamprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	office@sidlesham.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 May 2015

Information about this school

- Sidlesham Primary School is smaller than the average-sized maintained primary school. Currently, except in Year 6, pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2018. The previous headteacher had retired in April 2018. An interim headteacher led the school during the summer term.
- Most pupils are of White British origin. A very small proportion of pupils are believed to speak English as an additional language.
- The percentage of pupils with SEND, including those with an education, health and care plan, is well below the national average.
- The school is in an area of low social deprivation. Half as many pupils are eligible for the pupil premium than is the case nationally.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club called 'Hummingbirds', which caters for a small number of pupils. It opened in September 2018 and is run by school staff.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher to discuss a variety of issues linked to the school's work. She met with senior and middle leaders, and with groups of other staff, pupils and governors. She spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- All classes were visited to observe learning across the curriculum. These visits were carried out alongside school leaders. While in classrooms, the inspector spoke to pupils and looked at their work. She also considered samples of pupils' writing and mathematics work across early years and Years 1, 5 and 6.
- The inspector considered a wide range of documents that were provided by the school or available on its website. These included the school's self-evaluation and development plan, various policies, and leaders' records of pupils' attendance, behaviour and academic achievement.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements were scrutinised. This included reviewing the central record of recruitment checks, staff training, and records of leaders' work to protect pupils who may be at risk of harm.
- The inspector spoke informally to parents on the playground at the start of the school day. She also considered 70 responses to Parent View, including 56 free-text comments. In addition, she reviewed survey responses from 32 pupils and 13 members of staff.

Inspection team

Kathryn Moles, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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