

# South Borough Primary School

Stagshaw Close, Postley Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6TL

## Inspection dates

16–17 January 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and the head of school are ambitious for the school. They have worked effectively with the staff and the trust to ensure that teaching, learning, assessment and behaviour have improved across the school. These elements are now at a good standard.
- Middle leaders work hard to ensure that their responsibilities are well managed. The development opportunities offered by the trust and senior leadership are further developing new leaders' skills and knowledge and enabling them to become more strategic in their approach.
- Most pupils achieve well and make good progress in the core areas of the curriculum. Recent changes in the teaching of reading and writing are having a positive impact on all pupils' achievement. However, some pupils require further support and challenge in order to progress further.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported and consequently make good progress, particularly in English.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and well trained. They work closely with teachers and give effective extra support to pupils. Expectations are high for all pupils.
- The curriculum is broad and incorporates many different aspects of learning well. Links across the curriculum are strong. In many areas teachers' good subject knowledge ensures that pupils are engaged and learn well. However, the work for the most able pupils is sometimes not demanding enough.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous and show good concern for the needs of others. Pupils enjoy school. They are kept safe and feel safe.
- Early years is well led and the team works hard to ensure that children are well cared for and enjoy a range of learning experiences, both inside the class and outside. As a consequence, children make good progress.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their views of the school and are pleased with the recent improvements. They feel that their children learn well and are well looked after.
- The local governing body is ambitious for the school. Governors challenge and support leaders effectively. They make regular purposeful visits to the school and consequently understand the breadth of its work well.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the strategic capacity of middle leaders to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is maintained as the school continues to expand.
- Embed the successful teaching of English throughout the school to ensure that pupils of all abilities are supported appropriately.
- Provide activities across the wider curriculum that challenge the most able pupils and promote progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher is ambitious for all members of the school community and has a clear vision for the future of the school. With the support of the trust and the governing body, she has created a strong and resourceful leadership team and has established high expectations and high aspiration. Alongside the head of school, the executive headteacher has created a welcoming and friendly school where staff morale is high and pupils are happy and hard-working.
- Since their appointment, senior leaders have been focused on and work effectively to bring about the improvements recommended in the previous inspection. For example, pupils' behaviour has improved. Pupils are now respectful of adults and their peers and are keen to learn. The quality of teaching is at least good across the school and, as a result, pupils are engaged, motivated and making good progress.
- Senior leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas where improvements should be made. The simple but well-considered school development plan is focused and addresses effectively the areas for improvement. Leaders rigorously review changes to assess their effectiveness, and are responsive to need.
- There is an effective training programme, supported by the trust, for all teachers and teaching assistants, linked to the school development plan and to individual needs. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) monitors, manages and supports teaching assistants effectively in their roles. Teaching assistants are skilled and effective and are a valuable asset in supporting pupils' learning. Teachers in the early stages of their career are supported particularly well.
- The school offers a good range and balance of subjects. In some subjects the high quality of subject knowledge and resources enthuse and motivate pupils. However, in some subject areas pupils are not always fully engaged and tasks are not challenging. Leaders are aware of this and are already planning changes to support teachers further. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of clubs and other activities, particularly around music, design and technology, and art.
- The school works hard to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are particularly good at listening to, and valuing, the views of others. The school prayer is referred to by pupils and features in assemblies.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used well across the school to increase pupils' participation in sport and to help staff improve their skills and confidence in teaching physical education. Enhanced resources and specialist coaches have improved the quality of physical education within the school and the range of extra-curricular activities available.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding well to improve the progress that disadvantaged pupils make. Leaders are skilled at identifying any barriers to learning, supporting pupils and their families effectively and sensitively. As a result, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved and parents and carers are actively engaged in the school. In most year groups the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are in line with or better than those of other pupils across the curriculum.

## **Governance of the school**

- The local governing body is small but all members carry out their responsibilities with dedication, skill and knowledge. Members are well informed, enthusiastic and ambitious for the school, staff and pupils.
- Governors have welcomed the support offered by the trust and have a good understanding of the improvements that have been made because of this support. They work hard to maintain the school's individual identity and to strengthen links with the local community.
- Governors meet regularly with leaders and ask challenging questions. Members of the governing body are well informed about teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in statutory tests and across the school. They talk knowledgeably about new initiatives to improve progress and the positive impact they have already had.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are confident in identifying risks and reporting any concerns that may arise. All staff receive high-quality training on recognising any potential signs of risk. There is a comprehensive induction process for new staff to ensure that they know what to do.
- The culture of the school is caring and supportive and pupils know that staff care about them. Leaders ensure that pupils understand their role in creating a positive culture of safeguarding. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves healthy. They can explain clearly how to keep themselves safe online, and know whom to talk to if they are worried or concerned.
- Checks on staff and other adults working in the school are rigorous and centrally managed by the trust. School records are well kept and the executive headteacher and governors regularly monitor and review these.
- The head of school, as designated safeguarding lead, works closely with the SENCo and outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families are supported sensitively. Leaders keep careful records of this work. The planned training of a further safeguarding lead will enhance this good practice further.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teaching is consistently good across the school and most pupils achieve well. Pupils can identify where they are successful in their learning and are proud of the progress that they make. Challenge is provided for most pupils in the core areas.
- The quality of writing is a strength of the school. Leaders and teachers have responded well to the last inspection report and have driven improvements in all classes. Progress from individual starting points can be seen across the school. Pupils are immersed in a wide range of exciting vocabulary and this enhances their writing. However, in some classes less-able pupils struggle to access the language and the resources they were provided with.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are often given individualised work and

activities that are tailored to their needs. Teaching assistants and teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils feel included in the classroom experiences and are successful.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are consistently good. Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to discuss it with adults and their peers. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to ensure that pupils concentrate fully on their learning and achieve as well as they can.
- Mathematics teaching is good. The mathematics leader is supporting staff to improve progress and to help the pupils develop improved reasoning skills. Good subject knowledge and careful planning enable staff to develop pupils' understanding of concepts. Leaders recognise that more pupils should be achieving greater depth in their learning. Consequently, they have made sure that the most able pupils are increasingly challenged well. During the inspection the most able pupils were seen to enjoy grappling with challenging problem-solving activities.
- The school's recently adapted marking policy is used consistently by all teachers. Pupils have a good understanding of how their work is marked, and report that they find the feedback received from teachers helpful in improving their work. Pupils are proud of the work in their English portfolios and were keen to show inspectors the progress they had made in their writing.
- The teaching of phonics is effective and well led. Some pupils find this aspect of their learning hard, and additional support is provided for them. As a result, they achieve well by the end of Year 2. Workshops arranged by staff support parents' understanding and provide them with the skills to support their children at home.
- The school's recent focus on the teaching of reading and comprehension is rapidly improving pupils' understanding of texts. Pupils approach difficult texts confidently and can answer challenging questions. This was seen in Year 4, where pupils used their new skills effectively to explain how Lucy felt as she emerged from the wardrobe into the land of Narnia. The school's award-winning home-reading initiative has increased pupils' reading at home and helped pupils to improve their reading skills.
- A very large majority of parents who spoke to inspectors thought that their children were taught well and made good progress as a result. Some parents sought out inspectors during the inspection to provide positive comments about their child's experiences.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The breakfast and after-school clubs are well attended and provide good care. Pupils enjoy their time there.
- Pupils show great confidence and are keen to share their ideas and their thoughts. Several parents commented on how the school positively promotes pupils' self-esteem and self-assurance. Pupils know that their teachers listen to them and care about them. They feel valued.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure at school. One pupil described the environment as

'warm and friendly'. Pupils understand the safety procedures in the school and are regularly taught e-safety and road safety, ensuring that they can keep themselves safe online and in the community. Pupils know about bullying and what to do if they see or experience it. Pupils say bullying is rare but they are confident that their teachers will sort out any incidents quickly.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils recognise that behaviour has improved in the school and say this is because they are expected to behave and they follow the school rules. Pupils are polite and courteous and show consideration for one another as they move around the school and at playtimes. In the dining hall, they talk to each other enthusiastically and are well mannered and sociable. Older pupils are prepared to take responsibility for clearing up after lunch, or supporting younger members of the school.
- Pupils understand how to behave in class. They settle to work quickly, and generally persevere with activities. They collaborate well, sharing ideas and resources sensibly. Occasional instances of low-level disruption are managed well by staff and cause minimal disruption to others' learning.
- Pupils like school and attend regularly. Attendance is above the national average, and senior leaders continue to work at improving this further by giving out awards and engaging parents.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- Assessment information provided by the school and the work in pupils' books indicate that the large majority of pupils, especially lower- and middle-ability pupils, are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils have benefited from new initiatives in the teaching of reading and writing, a well-planned curriculum and good teaching.
- In the most recent assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieved standards that were at or above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, and were well prepared for the next stage of their education. Assessment information and pupils' books show that the achievement of current pupils across the school is good.
- Evidence in books shows that pupils in most years are being given more opportunities to work at a higher standard across the curriculum and practise their skills to deepen their knowledge. This has accelerated their progress. However, activities for the most able pupils in the wider curriculum are sometimes too easy. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they might.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress as a result of carefully targeted support either in lessons or to support their needs outside of school. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are also making progress as a result of good teaching and effective, targeted support from additional adults.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check fell in 2017 but was in line with the national average. School leaders are fully aware of this fall and strategies have rapidly been put in place to support learning

through Year 2. When pupils read to the inspector they showed developing phonic skills and fluency appropriate for their age.

- Pupils' progress is monitored closely by class teachers, together with the head of school and the SENCo. Pupils in danger of falling behind are given well-targeted support so that they catch up quickly. A wide range of strategies are used successfully to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Senior leaders check the impact of planned support to ensure that it is making a positive difference.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress in response to the close attention that teachers pay to the welfare and learning needs of individuals.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership of the early years is good. Supported by the trust, the early years leader has a firm grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and is able to support her staff team well. She has made appropriate changes to the provision to accommodate the additional 30 children who were admitted to Reception this year, and has maintained a stimulating and enabling environment.
- The majority of pupils enter the Reception Year with skills that are typically below expectations for their age. Teachers focus on the children gaining self-care skills and independence in the first few weeks, and last year all of the children reached the expected levels for their personal, social and emotional development. Many children have English as an additional language. As a consequence, practitioners ensure that vocabulary and language is given high priority and that the children have many opportunities to read and write.
- Teaching and learning is good across all classes in the early years. Teachers plan tasks that are well matched to the needs of the children. This enables them to make strong progress. In 2017 the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was above the national average. As a result, children leave the early years well prepared for Year 1.
- Children learn and play cheerfully together, making creative use of the inside and the outside learning areas. During the inspection the outdoor role-play area was 'Handa's pop-up fruit and vegetable store', which related to their class storybook. Children were enthusiastically buying and selling real fruit and vegetables. In another area children were cutting out shapes to create plates of 'healthy food' and writing down the names of the food.
- Relationships between adults and children are good and, as a result, children are happy and behave well. They are proud of their work and confidently show it to others. Children are kept safe and are well cared for. Safeguarding procedures are effective and welfare requirements are met fully.
- Parents are encouraged to play an active part in their children's education in early years. Nursery staff have good relationships with parents and are actively involved in the children's transition to Reception. A variety of activities, including 'stay and play', visits to other nurseries and home visits, ensure that teachers know the children before the beginning of the year and are able to plan effectively to meet their individual

needs. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the early years provision and the speed with which their children have settled.

## School details

Unique reference number	141650
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10040891

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Jim Johnson
Executive headteacher	Mrs Jeannine Olivier
Head of school	Mrs Tina Oakley
Telephone number	01622 752 161
Website	<a href="http://www.southboroughprimary.org.uk">www.southboroughprimary.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@sbps.kent.sch.uk">headteacher@sbps.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- South Borough Primary School is an average-sized primary school. Following the inspection of the predecessor school, the school converted to become an academy in 2015 and is part of the Swale Academies Trust. The trust provides development opportunities across all aspects of the school. Some financial and human resource processes are centralised.
- The school is in the process of expanding from one-form to two-form entry. Years 3 to 6 currently contain one class per year group and Years 1 and 2 have two classes each. Reception currently has three classes as the school was requested to take an additional class for this academic year. The school has 26 nursery places in the morning and afternoon and children attend full or part time.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average and increasing.

- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average. More than half of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties or a moderate learning difficulty.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher was appointed as the acting headteacher in 2013, became the substantive headteacher in 2015 and is now the executive headteacher, with responsibility for another school within the Swale Academies Trust. The head of school takes responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school, including assessment and the use of pupil premium. A deputy headteacher, who is employed by the trust, works across three schools. As part of the senior leadership team he takes responsibility for the core curriculum areas of English and mathematics at South Borough Primary School, the assessment of newly qualified teachers, and trainee teachers under the School Direct scheme.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club for five days a week.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons throughout the school jointly with the executive headteacher, the head of school and the trust's deputy headteacher. Inspectors also visited the breakfast and after-school clubs, and watched the pupils at playtime and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with the leadership team, middle leaders and newly qualified teachers.
- A meeting was held with six members of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the Swale Academies Trust.
- A number of documents were scrutinised, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, minutes of governing body meetings, the development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding information.
- The inspectors took account of the 46 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. They also met informally with parents and took account of letters and emails.
- The inspectors took account of 25 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and took account of their views.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, and met with groups of pupils and took account of their views.

## Inspection team

Tracy Good, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
James Freeston	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Brown	Ofsted Inspector

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