

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Brookpit Lane, Clymping, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 5QU

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and senior team lead the school well. They have focused on the right aspects of the school's work that require improvement.
- Pupils' attainment is rising and they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Key Stage 2 pupils make excellent progress in their writing.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving. Central to this is the well-planned curriculum that provides memorable experiences for pupils.
- Strong support for disadvantaged pupils and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs results in them making equally good progress as their peers.
- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start. They settle quickly and make good progress because of stimulating and well-planned activities.
- Pupils behave well and are enthusiastic about learning and their school. They report that they feel very safe in school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well catered for. The school's Christian, caring ethos and strong teaching in art and music contribute to this.
- Governors actively monitor the work of the school and have a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics for the most able pupils in Years 3 and 4 is not as quick as in reading and writing. Sometimes they are set work that is too easy.
- A few lower attaining pupils do not confidently apply phonics (the sounds that letters make) when reading or read regularly enough.
- Children in the Reception class are not given enough help in forming letters during some activities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons with the headteacher. She also undertook short observations through a 'learning walk' across all year groups.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff and two members of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- The inspector took account of the 40 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View), and a few letters from parents. She also spoke to some parents.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents about safeguarding. The inspector also took account of the eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector listened to Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils read.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children in Reception enter school full time in the first few weeks of the autumn term, and are taught in a single-age class.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium is average. This is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school during the school year other than at the usual times is above average.
- In recent years, the school has experienced significant staffing changes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club for its pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement through ensuring teaching is good or better by:
 - making sure the most able pupils are consistently challenged in mathematics so that more achieve at the highest levels
 - enabling lower attaining pupils to consistently apply their phonics skills when reading new words and ensuring they are heard to read very regularly in school
 - giving clear guidance to Reception children so that they form their letters more clearly during their own writing activities.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a strong leader and is well supported by the assistant headteacher. Together they have ensured the smooth running of the school during a period of considerable changes in staffing. All staff and governors are committed to improving the school further, and have accurately identified the right priorities.
- Senior leaders have a clear vision and have successfully driven improvements. The range of subjects is a strength of the school and the new primary curriculum requirements have been dovetailed with the school's existing creative approach. The wide range of topics encourages a thirst and love for learning.
- The school's actions to improve teaching have resulted in better achievement, for example in phonics and grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Systems to improve the quality of teaching are good. Teachers are regularly observed and receive regular feedback on how to improve. Their pay is linked closely to pupils' challenging achievement targets.
- Tailored staff training is in place to develop teachers' skills, including their subject knowledge. Some of this is within the local cluster of primary schools. The progress of pupils is closely checked and extra support is swiftly put into place when necessary.
- Middle leadership is shared well between staff, although some are new to their roles and still receiving training, including in mathematics.
- The local authority has a good relationship with the school and provides very 'light touch' support.
- The caring Christian atmosphere supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Pupils are encouraged to think about others' feelings and to value others' views and skills. The elections on to their eco council and debates about environmental issues provide them with opportunities to begin to understand the importance of democracy.
- The school's broader curriculum provides pupils with strong learning opportunities in the arts. All pupils in Key Stage 2 learn a musical instrument. Currently they are all learning the ukulele. The school's grounds are successfully used for stimulating pupils' learning in art and science.
- Sports funding is used effectively. Pupils enjoy a rich and varied physical education curriculum. Funding has provided staff training in a range of sports. It has increased opportunities for pupils to be taught by professional sports coaches alongside pupils from other schools and to take part in more competitive sport with other schools.
- Most parents are pleased with their children's progress and the quality of teaching. However, a few expressed concern about the way mathematics was being taught and pupils' progress. The inspection evidence found that the teaching of mathematics is still improving, but it does not consistently challenge the most able pupils.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are thorough and meet legal requirements, including for child protection. Staff and governors receive up-to-date training that helps them to ensure the school's arrangements are effective.
- The school is committed to equality of opportunity and works hard to ensure that all pupils do well. Effective systems are in place to foster good relationships and tackle discrimination.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body's checks on the school's work are well organised and ensure that its members have up-to-date training so they can fulfil their roles well. Governors scrutinise information about pupils' achievement carefully and check the quality of teaching through regular visits. They know about the strengths and areas for development in teaching and check that teachers are receiving the right support to help them improve their practice. They have implemented good procedures to manage the performance of the headteacher and make sure pay rises for staff are deserved. They keep careful financial records and check to ensure that the school's finances are well spent and that additional government funding is improving pupils' skills and experiences. Governors ensure that safeguarding processes are robust and rigorously implemented by staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in and out of classrooms. They are considerate towards each other, respectful to staff and are welcoming to new classmates and visitors.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They show curiosity about what they are learning, think for themselves and cooperate well with each other. They work hard and take a lot of pride in their school and in presenting their work neatly.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well by rewarding good behaviour and providing appropriate sanctions for any instances of poor behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour is generally good. This is supported by parents who completed the Parent View survey, where most felt that the school ensured pupils behaved well.
- Pupils develop their leadership skills as they become playground sports leaders and help other pupils to enjoy sport and become more proficient. They learn to look after their environment, for example by caring for their school garden and actively trying to minimise the use of natural resources.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is above national expectations. Systems for monitoring attendance have been tightened. Staff are vigilant in following up absence and ensuring parents understand the importance of not taking their children away from school for holidays in term time.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. School leaders work well with external agencies and, working closely with families, obtain necessary help where needed. Risk assessments are thorough.
- Pupils say they are kept and feel very safe. They have few concerns about bullying and say they know what to do should it happen. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. The vast majority of parents think their children are well cared for and kept safe.
- A very small minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying. The inspection found the school records all incidents carefully and deals effectively with the few isolated incidents.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is good and improving. This has had a positive effect on pupils' learning and progress across the school. Newer staff have quickly established good relationships with pupils and contribute well to pupils' good progress.
- The exciting and stimulating curriculum brings learning to life. Pupils are given many opportunities to apply their reading, writing and mathematics in other subject areas. For example, Year 6 pupils successfully used mathematics for measuring, recording and interpreting their results when conducting science experiments on forces.
- Teachers' checks on pupils' work are robust. They were moderated last year and found to be accurate. Leaders are currently revisiting their assessment arrangements in the light of recent changes to the National Curriculum.
- School leaders have revised the systems for teaching phonics. The teaching programme is carefully organised and the consistent approach across the school is enabling all pupils to learn well.
- Pupils are keen to read but reading records show that a few lower attaining pupils do not read their books often enough, either at home or at school. Occasionally, staff do not enable lower attaining pupils to apply their knowledge of phonics well enough when reading. This reduces their confidence in tackling new words.
- The robust teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling is very effective. Teachers enable pupils to successfully apply these skills when writing stories or expressing their ideas in English and other subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics has been revised and is having a good impact in raising pupils' attainment. However, in Years 3 and 4, mathematics activities are sometimes too easy for the most able pupils when teachers do not provide enough challenge.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good as a result of the school's emphasis on subject training, for example in writing. It is also greatly enhanced by teaching alongside specialists in music and sport.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, and those who are eligible for additional funding. They make a good contribution to pupils' progress in classrooms and throughout the school day.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and give them clear advice on what they have done well and how to improve their work. Pupils' work shows that they respond to this advice well and use it to make improvements.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress throughout the school and consequently their

attainment is rising.

- A large majority enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are typical of their age. Their attainment at the end of Reception Year has improved in recent years, and is above average. This means that children are well prepared to enter Year 1.
- Year 1 pupils do well in the national phonics checks. Systems for teaching phonics have been improved and pupils enter Year 2 better prepared than before. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Year 6 pupils' achievement is good and has improved markedly, particularly in mathematics. In 2014, Year 6 pupils' attainment was average in reading and mathematics. This represented good progress from their starting points that were similar to national figures in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards in writing are above average and scrutiny of pupils' books shows pupils make excellent progress in writing at Key Stage 2. Year 6 pupils' performance in 2014 national tests in English grammar, punctuation and spelling improved considerably, with three quarters attaining the higher levels.
- The most able pupils make good progress overall but slightly fewer attained higher levels in mathematics. In 2014, no pupils achieved Level 6 in mathematics. However, in the current Year 6, a higher proportion is on track to achieve the higher levels. In a few younger classes, the most able pupils are not challenged in mathematics and spend too long going over work they have already completed.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs varies from class to class as does the complexity of their needs. They make good progress because of the strong support they receive. Those who join the school later often enter Key Stage 2 with gaps in their skills and knowledge. However, good support enables them to catch up and make good progress.
- Over time, as a result of effective use of additional funding, disadvantaged pupils make similarly good progress as their classmates. Results of the 2014 national tests for Year 6 showed there was no gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in school or nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013, this group of pupils were well above the national average in reading, above average in writing but in mathematics, they were below average like their peers. Current school information indicates that any in-school attainment gaps between different year groups are closing rapidly.
- By Year 6, pupils write extremely well for a range of purposes. They express their ideas clearly using imaginative vocabulary, well-constructed sentences, and accurate punctuation and spelling. Their 'sparkly writing' shows much creativity while their factual writing is precise. It is often based on robust research from books or computers or from their investigative work in science and geography.
- Pupils enjoy reading, often read widely at home and at school and their love of books is developed as they move through the school. The most able pupils are avid readers and use a wide range of skills to bring reading to life.
- However, a few lower attaining pupils are not always confident when combining new sounds to read words. They do not have enough opportunity to practise their new sounds before reading their books. Sometimes these pupils do not read often enough at home and are not heard to read in school on a daily basis.

The early years provision

is good

- Although a large majority enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are typical of their age a few have low communication and language skills or personal development. Children make good progress, so that more now reach or exceed a good level of development. This is an improvement as children previously entered Key Stage 1 with only broadly average levels of attainment.
- Children enjoy school and behave well because they are given a wide range of well-organised interesting activities which take account of their interests and excite their curiosity. They learn in a supportive atmosphere and adults provide a great deal of encouragement and praise.
- During the inspection children were learning about autumn. Here they were mesmerised by the shapes, colours and sizes of different leaves as they created paintings, leaf rubbings or models for their 'Birthday Tree'. They are given many opportunities for expressing ideas through interesting activities both indoors and outside, for example when buying and selling toys in their 'Toy Shop'.
- Teaching is good and staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Children develop their phonics, reading and writing skills well when working with adults. However, during some writing activities, children are not given enough reminders of the letters that sounds represent, which limits their accuracy in forming letters.
- Staff look after the children well and children are kept safe and feel safe. Both the indoor and outdoor

areas are safe. The outdoor area has been improved since the last inspection and now provides worthwhile learning opportunities across the different areas of learning.

- The early years is well led and managed. Transition arrangements from pre-schools to Reception and partnership working with parents are good.

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	126024
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	443981

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Griffiths
Headteacher	Janet Llewelyn
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2009
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