

# St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Link Lane, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 2AN

## Inspection dates

19–20 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher, leaders and governors ensure that teaching is good and that pupils typically make good progress in each class.
- The early years provision is highly effective in supporting children's rapid development and learning. Children make excellent progress in the Reception class.
- The above average levels reached at the end of Year 2 are built upon in most subjects so pupils continue to achieve well by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.
- Leaders have acted decisively and effectively to address a dip in the Key Stage 2 reading and writing results in 2014. Their quick actions ensure that current pupils make rapid progress.
- Teaching is typically good. Teachers make learning fun and relevant, which captures pupils' interests and engages them.
- Governors share the headteacher's ambition for the school. Together, they are working well to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement back to the outstanding levels seen in the previous inspection. Governors know the school well and provide effective support.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of different religions, cultures and British values.
- Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning are a major strength of the school. Pupils are very proud of their school.
- Pupils feel extremely safe in school because adults provide very high quality guidance and support.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. They are invited into school regularly and value the opportunities to be involved in their children's education.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress is not yet rapid enough to secure outstanding achievement in all year groups.
- Pupils' handwriting is variable in quality and so sometimes work is untidy and hard to read.
- Teaching does not always ensure that pupils are challenged to do their very best.
- Not all subject leaders are fully confident about checking the quality of teaching or in identifying key actions needed to further raise pupils' achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 29 lessons; two of these lessons were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff, members of the governing body, parents and a representative from the local authority.
- 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 their books.
- A discussion was held with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lessons and at break times. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoy.
- Inspectors took account of 134 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own surveys, as well as 13 letters received from parents.
- Inspectors took into consideration the 36 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

David Harris, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional Inspector
Hazel Burnie	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Mary's Church of England School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is expanding from a one-form entry school to a two-form entry. In order to accommodate the growing number of pupils, there have been extensive building works since the previous inspection.
- Children taught in the early years attend full time.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils provided with support funded by the pupil premium is lower than average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for looked after children.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has experienced significant changes in teaching staff, and in the membership of the governing body, since the previous inspection.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress to secure outstanding achievement by making sure that:
  - all pupils present their work neatly using good quality handwriting when writing in a range of subjects
  - class teachers consistently set work at the right level of difficulty to challenge pupils, according to their ability.
- Make sure that all subject leaders are confident in their roles so that all play a full part in improving teaching and pupils' learning in the areas for which they are responsible.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and her senior team have high expectations of all pupils and staff. Parents and staff are very supportive of the school's leadership. Ninety nine percent of parents surveyed said they would recommend the school to others.
- Central to the school's caring approach is the importance of each pupil. All adults make increasingly accurate checks on pupils' progress and are helping to support each individual. Pupils flourish in an atmosphere of mutual respect and a safe and happy environment. Staff and pupils do not tolerate discrimination of any sort.
- The school's own view of the quality of its work is accurate; leaders know the school's strengths and the next steps they need to take. Staff morale is high and everyone shares the headteacher's drive to return the school to its previously outstanding levels of effectiveness.
- Overall, the monitoring of teaching is effective. Some middle leaders, including those in charge of subjects, have considerable expertise in, and enthusiasm for, the areas for which they are responsible. Established middle leaders carry out their roles effectively through, for example, checking teaching and identifying areas for development. This information helps leaders to identify clear priorities and provide helpful support and challenge. Those who are new to their roles, however, have yet to have a significant impact on the quality of teaching.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding appropriately. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is monitored carefully and shows that the funding has had a positive impact on pupils' rates of progress.
- The school offers pupils a wide range of subjects and activities, balanced successfully between academic, sporting and creative subjects. There is a strong and successful focus on English and mathematics.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school's work. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and value diversity and to respect others. One pupil said, 'One of our golden rules is to appreciate each other's uniqueness.'
- Pupils know about different cultures and religious beliefs represented in Britain. They take part in elections for the school council and learn about pupils' voice and democracy. They learn about tolerance, respect and British values. The school prepares them well for life in modern Britain. One parent said the headteacher 'has created a culture of inclusion, which enables children of all social backgrounds to mix'.
- The school uses the primary sport funding effectively. It successfully raises the awareness of, and opportunities for, pupils to take part in a wide range of sporting activities. The school provides a wide range of clubs and pupil participation is high. This helps promote healthy lifestyles for all.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements and are highly effective. Pupils feel safe in school and their parents agree that they are kept safe.
- The school makes good use of the local authority's support to confirm the accuracy of its own judgements on the quality of the school's work. The local authority is confident that the school is providing a good education and that it only requires 'light touch' support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors, recognising that some areas of the school's performance have dipped, have increased their monitoring and challenge to make sure that the school gets back on track quickly. They support the school well and are actively involved in guiding long-term development, aided by attending training on a range of issues. Governors know about the quality of teaching because the headteacher keeps them well informed. They visit the school regularly to see how teaching is improving. They know what the school is doing to improve teaching and to eradicate weak practice. They have a good knowledge about the school's performance information and how it compares to other schools locally and nationally. Governors hold the school to account robustly and meet their statutory obligations well. They know how salary progression is used to reward and support teachers' practice and use the information about the quality of teaching well to inform their decisions. Systems for checking the school's budget are very strong, including the monitoring of pupil premium spending. This enables governors to hold the school to account and decide whether it is making a difference to pupils' achievement.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are proud of their school. They have very positive attitudes to

learning.

- Conduct in and around the school is good and pupils follow the school rules. When pupils come together, for instance in a whole-school assembly, they are polite, courteous and show that the school is a happy harmonious community.
- Pupils enjoy learning, including when supported by adults. They say there is very little poor behaviour around the school. School records and discussions with parents, staff and governors show that behaviour is typically good. Parents who responded to Parent View confirm this.
- Although pupils are proud of what they do, they are not always careful in the way they present their work. Pupils' work in books is sometimes untidy and difficult for others to read.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents place a very high value on the school's work to keep their children safe.
- 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.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Through assemblies and personal, social and health education, pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations. This includes when using the road and when exposed to potential hazards. Pupils also have an excellent appreciation of e-safety. They apply their understanding to everyday situations as they arise.
- School staff work highly effectively with external agencies to support children and their families.

### **The quality of teaching**

**is good**

- Teaching is typically good and enables pupils to make good progress.
- Many teachers ask questions that encourage pupils to think and deepen their understanding. Pupils respond eagerly to these questions and are keen to contribute to class discussions. They work well individually, in pairs or groups.
- The teaching of writing is good. A focus in the last year has led to improvements in the quality of pupils' writing. Teachers mark pupils' work effectively and provide useful feedback for them. Teachers' comments offer guidance so that pupils know what they have to do to improve. Pupils' responses show that they act upon teachers' advice.
- The work seen in pupils' books as well as records kept by class teachers and senior leaders, and evidence gathered by the inspectors all demonstrate that the quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils find the work interesting, and usually challenging. On occasions, however, some pupils say they would like harder work. For example, pupils of different abilities are not always set work that is demanding enough for them.
- A positive climate for learning pervades the school. Displays of pupils' work celebrate how they apply their writing skills in a range of topics. Pupils regularly use displays on which they record, for example, their developing ideas to support their learning in literacy.
- Teachers successfully foster an enjoyment for reading. They introduce interesting books to the class and provide a number of effective ways to enthuse pupils to read widely and enthusiastically. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is good. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to apply their reading skills in different subjects to find information.
- Pupils learn well in mathematics because the teaching is good and activities are planned effectively. Pupils say they enjoy the opportunities to challenge themselves and deepen their knowledge. For example, in a mixed Year 5 and 6 class, pupils enjoyed learning how to use and apply long division. Pupils successfully used the long division method and were able to clearly explain the mathematical skills needed to apply long division to real-life problems.

### **The achievement of pupils**

**is good**

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school. When they start school, a majority of the children have weak communication skills and abilities. Rapid progress in the early years enables them to catch up quickly, so that they enter Key Stage 1 broadly in line with national expectations.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 shows that pupils are learning to read well and that the teaching of phonics is good. In the last phonics

screening check in 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was in line with the national average, a big improvement on the previous year. By the end of Year 2, pupils are working at standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The school has taken action to ensure the dip in reading standards in 2014 does not happen again. Teachers have had additional training about the teaching of reading and this helps pupils who find reading difficult. As a result, some pupils have recently made very rapid progress in reading and most pupils currently in the school, in Year 6 and in other years, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents an improvement on previous years and is leading to higher standards. Inspectors' review of pupils' books and pupils' reading skills show that the school's assessments are accurate and that pupils' current progress in reading, writing and mathematics is at least good.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting is too variable. Some pupils' handwriting is well formed and consistent. This helps them to get their ideas down on paper efficiently and clearly. However, this is not the case for others. Pupils produce good quality work for displays around the school, but they do not use the same good quality handwriting when working in books, including their English books.
- The performance of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in the 2014 national tests indicated that they were three and a half terms behind other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. The results also showed that they were less than three terms behind other pupils nationally. Current checks on the progress being made by these pupils, across the school, show that these gaps are closing. This shows the school's success in narrowing significantly the gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from good teaching and progress well. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to make sure that these pupils benefit from all of the activities provided for them which are specially adapted when appropriate. Teaching assistants also ensure that the pupils they support are fully involved in classroom activities.
- In 2014, the attainment of the most able pupils was above the national average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Evidence from pupils, their work and the school's assessment information indicates that standards are continuing to rise.
- By the end of Year 6, the attainment of the most able pupils was below average for writing and average in reading and mathematics.
- Almost all the parents who responded to the Parent View survey agreed that their children make good progress.

### The early years provision

### is outstanding

- Children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. They achieve extremely well and make rapid progress during their time in early years. They are very well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Adults constantly ask questions, regularly make informal observations, and use lots of different ways to record innovatively each child's emerging strengths and areas for development. All adults are involved in reshaping and planning additional activities and resources. They respond very well to children's changing interests, and engage continuously with all learners.
- Staff work closely with parents. Parents say that communication with staff in the early years is very effective, and that they are encouraged to be involved in their children's education. This helps children to settle down quickly into routines and to interact well with others.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and, as a result, they work happily and very well together. They participate fully in all activities and clearly enjoy their learning.
- Leadership of the early years is outstanding. Teamwork is excellent and ensures that all children are well cared for and safe at all times.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126048
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	453379
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	343
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Peat
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alyson Heath
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 November 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01798 872007
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