

# Churchwood Primary Academy

Church-in-the-Wood Lane, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 9PB

## Inspection dates

27–28 June 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The principal provides exceptional leadership for the school. Teachers, leaders and governors share her determination to make sure that every pupil achieves well, both academically and socially.
- The school's highly effective work to support pupils' personal development means that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils are keen to learn, and behave extremely well.
- Well-established safeguarding procedures and strong relationships between adults and pupils ensure that pupils have a strong sense of their own personal safety. Pupils have every confidence in their teachers to sort out any worries that may arise.
- Excellent teaching during early years, combined with high-quality care for children's personal and social needs, ensures that children make very substantial progress from their starting points.
- The governing body and the academy trust provide robust support and rigorous challenge for the school.
- Leaders and governors have secured consistently good-quality teaching, learning and assessment during key stages 1 and 2.
- Effective teaching ensures that pupils make rapid progress from their starting points in English, mathematics and science during both key stages.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science. However, they do not always have the same high expectations of the work completed by pupils in other subjects.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of subjects such as history and geography have not been in place long enough to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they could across the curriculum.
- Teaching does not always ensure that pupils learn deeply enough in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

## Full report

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

- Strengthen pupils' learning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science by ensuring that:
  - teaching consistently challenges and deepens pupils' learning in subjects such as history and geography
  - teachers have the same high expectations of pupils' work across the curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Leaders and governors have made a number of significant and sustained improvements to the school's work during the past few years. They have raised teachers' expectations of pupils' learning, secured substantial and sustained improvements in pupils' behaviour and established a highly effective early years team. The school has a well-deserved reputation in the local community as a welcoming, caring and successful school.
- The principal is absolutely committed to securing the best outcomes for every pupil, regardless of their background or ability. Her positive, determined and good-humoured leadership inspires the confidence and loyalty of staff, governors and parents alike. The principal and vice-principal work extremely well together, exemplifying the strong teamwork evident across the school.
- Staff morale is high. Staff and governors share the principal's high aspirations for the future of the school and for its pupils. All members of staff who completed the online questionnaire say that they are proud to work in the school, reflecting the school's confident and positive atmosphere.
- Many pupils in the school are disadvantaged by their backgrounds or by personal circumstances. Leaders make very good use of pupil premium funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the opportunities and skills that they need to achieve well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress. By the end of Year 6, they are well prepared with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the next stage of their education.
- Leaders constantly check pupils' progress and meet regularly with teachers to discuss pupils' learning. This means that leaders can respond quickly to pupils' changing academic and personal needs. Senior leaders and the academy trust have established rigorous systems which support the school's work very well, including robust assessment procedures.
- The principal has extended and strengthened middle leadership considerably in the past few years. She has developed phase leaders' roles so that they make a strong contribution to ongoing improvements in the school's work. Phase leaders work very effectively within year groups and key stages to check that developments are in place and to ensure consistency of approach across the school.
- Subject leaders constantly review and improve aspects of teaching in the light of pupils' achievement. For example, the mathematics leader has effectively supported teachers and teaching assistants to improve the teaching of reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Leaders use staff training well to develop teachers' skills in supporting pupils' particular needs. For example, in recent years, training has strengthened teachers' understanding of children's development. This has enabled teachers to provide highly effective support for those pupils who have significant emotional and behavioural needs.
- The vice-principal has secured notable improvements in the teaching of reading during the past year. For example, she has ensured that teachers are more knowledgeable

about teaching comprehension skills than previously. As a result, pupils are better equipped to tackle the increased demands of the national curriculum.

- Leaders use special needs funding extremely well to support those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, the school employs a number of specialists, including a speech and language therapist, to support pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils develop personal and social skills which enable them to make strong progress in their learning. The special needs coordinator and the school's parent support adviser work closely and constructively with parents to ensure that they are well informed about their children's progress.
- Leaders use physical education funding effectively to encourage pupils to be physically active. For example, large numbers of pupils participate in the wide range of games provided during the lunch break so that they keep fit while having fun. Good-quality training has ensured that teachers are increasingly confident about teaching physical education. Pupils make better progress in developing sports skills, as a result.
- Pupils learn about a number of world religions, including Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. They are encouraged to explore similarities between religions and beliefs, as well as learning about the distinctive characteristics of each. For example, during a topic on worship, pupils in Year 6 considered the role and significance of the mosque in the community and completed some thoughtful work.
- The school's own values are consistent with British values. They are woven throughout the curriculum. The school's motto, 'At Churchwood, everyone can!', reflects its commitment to ensuring that all pupils become confident learners, achieve well and do their best.
- Leaders tailor the curriculum well to ensure that learning is relevant and interesting. Clubs, visits and visitors enhance pupils' enjoyment of school and contribute well to pupils' regular attendance.
- Leaders make good use of training and expertise within the academy trust to develop the quality of teaching and learning. For example, in the past year training has improved the effectiveness of teaching in subjects across the wider curriculum. However, these developments have not been in place long enough to ensure that pupils make the same strong progress in subjects such as history and geography as they do in English, mathematics and science.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governing body represents a wide range of skills and expertise. Governors work positively and constructively with school leaders and members of the academy trust. They provide highly effective support and challenge for school leaders.
- Governors are understandably proud of the school. They frequently visit the school and meet with leaders. As a result, they can see for themselves the very positive difference that leaders have made to pupils' learning during the past few years. Governors have every confidence in the school's leadership to secure the highest outcomes for pupils.
- Governors regularly attend meetings with senior leaders to discuss the quality of teaching and learning and the school's development. As a result, they speak knowledgeably about the school's work.

- Governors give pupils' safety an appropriately high priority and are alert to safeguarding issues. The governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding works effectively with members of the academy trust to check that policies and procedures are up to date.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders maintain efficient and systematic procedures to ensure that pupils are safe. They ensure that policies are in place and that records are stored securely. Leaders make sure that recruitment checks are completed appropriately when new members of staff are appointed.
- The academy provides regular training to ensure that all governors and members of staff are clear about safeguarding procedures and are vigilant about pupils' safety. For example, all governors and members of staff are acutely aware of the potential risks of radicalisation and extremism, and have completed 'Prevent' training so that they know the steps that they should take if they have any concerns.
- Leaders make sure that parents know whom to contact if they have any worries about pupils' safety. The school's positive and welcoming atmosphere ensures that parents and pupils are confident about speaking to members of staff about any issues. The principal and vice-principal regularly make themselves available to chat with parents during the school day.
- Leaders have ongoing discussions with a range of agencies about pupils' safety and well-being, including children's services and the local authority safeguarding team. This coordinated approach ensures that pupils at risk of harm are supported effectively.
- All members of staff who completed the online questionnaire feel that pupils are safe in school. Parents are confident that their children are in safe hands.

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

**Good**

- The quality of teaching has improved since the school converted to academy status. Consistently effective teaching across key stages 1 and 2 ensures that pupils make strong progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Good-quality mathematics teaching ensures that pupils develop a secure knowledge of number and mathematical operations. Teachers and teaching assistants use practical equipment well to develop pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts. Teachers give pupils in all year groups regular opportunities to use mathematical knowledge to solve problems at an appropriate level of difficulty.
- The teaching of reading has improved considerably during the past year so that activities deepen and extend pupils' understanding of texts more effectively. Teachers have increased opportunities for pupils to read for pleasure during the school day. They make sure that classroom book corners are attractive and inviting places for pupils to enjoy books. As a result, pupils speak with interest about their reading.
- Confident and consistent phonics teaching ensures that pupils acquire secure reading skills. Teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to develop and extend pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary during phonics sessions.

- The teaching of science focuses on building pupils' use of investigative skills, such as designing a fair test, as well as developing pupils' scientific knowledge. Teachers set pupils challenging and interesting activities which ensure that pupils make strong progress in science.
- Teaching assistants work flexibly with pupils of all abilities, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They provide reassurance and encouragement so that pupils persevere when the work is more difficult, as well as teaching alongside teachers.
- The quality of teaching across the wider curriculum has improved during recent months. However, teachers do not always have the same high expectations of pupils' work in subjects such as history and geography as they do in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching does not yet deepen and challenge pupils' learning well enough to ensure that they achieve as well as they could across the wider curriculum.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders rightly focus on building pupils' personal development and social skills from the moment that children start school in early years. High-quality care for individual pupils' needs ensures that they develop learning skills rapidly. For example, pupils of all abilities learn to persevere when tackling activities which they find more difficult. Skills such as these make a significant contribution to ensuring that pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6 and prepare them effectively for the next stage of their learning.
- In the past, pupils' attendance has been consistently lower than the national average. However, leaders have secured year-on-year improvements in attendance during the past few years. They have secured further substantial improvements in attendance this year, including in disadvantaged pupils' attendance. Leaders are acutely aware of the need to build on their success in recent years. They continue to do everything possible to ensure that all pupils attend regularly.
- Pupils know why it is important to attend regularly. They say that the attendance officer phones their parents straightaway if they are absent without reason, and understand how this ensures that they are safe.
- Pupils speak sensibly about what they can do to help to keep themselves safe, including when using the computer. Pupils say that teachers and special visitors give them regular reminders about some of the potential risks of using the internet and that this helps them to stay alert to danger. Most parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire feel that pupils are safe and happy in school.
- The breakfast club provides a comfortable, secure and positive start to the school day for those who attend.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well during lessons, playtimes and when moving around the school. They are sensitive to the feelings of their classmates and speak respectfully to adults. One pupil's comment illustrates the school's atmosphere very well: 'We work hard together, and it's a calm and peaceful place.'
- Pupils say that behaviour in school is much better than it was a few years ago. They say that teachers sort out occasional disagreements between pupils quickly and that any poor behaviour is addressed immediately.
- Pupils say that bullying simply does not happen in the school. Discussions with leaders and school records confirm that bullying is very rarely a concern. Leaders respond seriously and promptly to any worries raised by pupils, parents or members of staff.
- Most parents feel that pupils are well behaved in school.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils' learning and progress pick up momentum as pupils move up through the year groups. This is illustrated by outcomes in 2016. While standards were below age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 in 2016, they were in line with the national average in reading and above national averages in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education by the end of key stage 2, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Pupils are keen to read, and do so regularly in school and at home. Developments in the teaching of reading during the past year have improved pupils' comprehension skills. Pupils discuss their reading with increasing interest, confidence and enjoyment. Standards in reading are higher in all year groups than last year.
- The results of the Year 1 phonics check improved substantially in 2016 and were above national averages. Pupils currently in Year 1 have made similarly strong progress in developing phonics skills.
- The school's focus during the past year on developing and extending pupils' vocabulary has improved the quality of pupils' written work. Pupils enjoy using an increasingly wide vocabulary during discussions and in their written work.
- Pupils acquire an increasingly secure knowledge of number as they move up through the year groups, and are well equipped with mathematics skills. The work in their books illustrates the strong progress that they make in mathematics throughout the school.
- In 2016, standards in science at the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average. The work in pupils' books indicates that pupils are thoroughly prepared with scientific knowledge and investigative skills to ensure a good start in the next stage of their education.
- The most able pupils make good progress and achieve well, including those who are disadvantaged. In 2016, the proportions of pupils working at a greater depth of understanding at the end of Year 6 were in line with national averages in writing and

mathematics, but below average in reading. Changes made to the teaching of reading during the past year have accelerated the progress made by the most able pupils, enabling them to develop more sophisticated comprehension skills. As a result, those currently in Year 6 were better equipped to tackle the recent national tests than was the case in previous years.

- Disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress from their different starting points. Some disadvantaged pupils have complex additional needs which make it more difficult for them to achieve well. This means that nationally published test results for the end of key stage 2 do not always give a true picture of the rapid progress that pupils make from their starting points. Differences between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and that of other pupils diminish as they move up through the school.
- Effective support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that pupils approach activities with increasing confidence and make strong progress.
- The quality of the work that pupils complete in subjects such as history and geography is not of the same consistently high quality as the work produced in English, mathematics and science. Pupils, including the most able, do not achieve as well as they could in some of the other subjects across the wider curriculum.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- In the past few years, leaders have focused on developing the quality of provision in early years so that children get off to the best start possible in their schooling. Their success is clear in the phenomenal progress that children make from their starting points, which are often very low.
- The below-average proportions of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception Year in 2016 do not give a fair picture of children's learning. Children get an excellent start to their schooling in early years. The work in children's learning journals provides a vivid picture of the significant progress made by children during Nursery and Reception Year. By the end of Reception Year, children are extremely well placed for learning in Year 1.
- Many children start school with poor speaking and language skills. Leaders recognise the significant difficulty that this represents for children's learning. They have established a highly knowledgeable and skilful team, including a speech and language therapist, to support children's development.
- Adults model language clearly and consistently to support and extend children's vocabulary. They use every opportunity to develop children's learning through play. For example, during the inspection, adults reinforced children's understanding of vocabulary such as 'same', 'different', 'pouring' and 'empty' while children played enthusiastically with water in guttering. Children watch adults intently and copy the strong role models that adults provide.
- The early years team works very cohesively and extremely effectively together, ensuring that children make very rapid progress in developing the key language, vocabulary and social skills needed to learn successfully.
- A wide range of stimulating and appealing activities help children to develop hand



strength and writing skills while thoroughly enjoying themselves. Effective phonics teaching equips children with some of the tools needed to write confidently. Many children write clearly and legibly by the end of Reception Year.

- Leaders make sure that they provide activities which are more challenging for the older children and for the most able children so that they make the same rapid progress as their classmates. Adults are very successful in encouraging children of all ages to join in with activities.
- The early years classrooms and outdoor areas are very well organised so that children can play and learn safely. Adults ensure that children have a quiet area if they need some rest, although, during the inspection, children were far too busy to rest for long.
- Adults respond promptly to children's physical and emotional needs. All early years staff have completed paediatric first-aid training and are extremely knowledgeable about children's development in the early years.
- Children in Reception Year and Nursery play together harmoniously. They behave extremely well and are keen to please their teachers. The older children provide strong role models for the younger children to emulate.

## School details

Unique reference number	141261
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10032482

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	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Alan Roberts
Principal	Tracy Curl
Telephone number	01424 852 326
Website	<a href="http://www.churchwoodprimaryacademy.org.uk/">www.churchwoodprimaryacademy.org.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@churchwoodcp.e-sussex.sch.uk">office@churchwoodcp.e-sussex.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils’ attainment and progress.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much higher than that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- Children in Nursery and Reception Year are taught together in the early years

classrooms.

- The school is a member of the Hastings Academies Trust.
- This is the first inspection of the school since it converted to academy status in September 2014. When the predecessor school was inspected in November 2013, it was judged to require improvement.
- The school has a breakfast club.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed pupils learning in 21 lessons or part-lessons, including 10 observed jointly with the principal or vice-principal.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal, vice-principal, senior and middle leaders, and representatives of the academy trust. They also spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspection team took account of 24 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as views expressed informally during the school day. Inspectors also considered 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including safeguarding policies, the school's improvement plan and information about pupils' progress and attendance.
- The inspection team looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 reading.

## Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Shields	Ofsted Inspector
Becky Greenhalgh	Ofsted Inspector

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