

Fernhurst Primary School

Haslemere Road, Fernhurst, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 3EA

Inspection dates

12–13 July 2017

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	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' diligent work has ensured that the school has improved since it opened as an academy in September 2014, so that the school is now good.
- The University of Chichester Academy Trust has supported the school's development well. Its strategic approach and commitment to improving leaders' and teachers' skills have benefited the school.
- Pupils across the school make good and improving progress and achieve well, particularly in reading and mathematics. Standards in phonics are high. Progress in writing needs to improve further.
- Teachers ensure that pupils work hard. Pupils develop appropriate skills such as resilience and perseverance, which help them to be successful.
- Pupils behave well and are happy. They are well cared for and kept safe by adults. Work to support vulnerable pupils is well organised.
- The broad and balanced curriculum supports pupils' good preparation for life in modern Britain. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and emotional development is well planned. Pupils benefit from community involvement in the work of the school.
- Teachers' questions ensure that pupils understand what they need to do to develop knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. Learning is planned well to meet pupils' needs from their different starting points. The most able pupils are challenged to achieve high standards.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs are supported well to make good and sometimes rapid progress.
- Provision in the early years has improved over time. However, it is not yet good because teaching requires improvement and not enough pupils reach a good level of development. There are not enough opportunities for boys to develop their writing skills well enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in the early years, including in the quality of teaching and learning and in boys' writing.
- Improve further the quality of writing across the school so that pupils make improved progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders at all levels have worked diligently and successfully to improve the school since it became an academy in September 2014. Leaders' strategic approach has ensured that the school continues to improve, despite some recent changes at senior leadership level. This is largely due to the acting headteacher's dedication to the school and her determination that all pupils can reach their full potential. As one parent said, 'The acting headteacher has been brilliant. She listens, obviously cares and has had a positive impact in a short space of time.'
- The University of Chichester Academy Trust has made sure that leaders receive the training and support they need to be successful in their roles. As a result, leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and priorities for further improvement of the school, and the capacity to oversee the school's further development.
- Leaders use assessment information robustly to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. Consequently, teachers are more aware of pupils' potential than they have been in the past and so plan to meet their needs more precisely. As a result, current pupils make good and improving progress.
- Staff performance is managed well by leaders. Teachers value highly the training and support they receive, which links well to their aspirations. Frequent opportunities to share good practice within school and across the trust help them to improve constantly and refine their teaching skills. As one said, 'Teachers work well together here. We are treated as professionals.'
- Leaders ensure that provision for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well organised and effective. Teaching assistants are well trained, knowing just how much to intervene to help pupils to learn. Leaders check the impact of support thoroughly, adjusting provision based on their research of what works best.
- Leaders make sure that the curriculum is planned well so that pupils gain knowledge and understanding in a broad range of subjects. Activities are designed to interest pupils in the world around them. For example, in science, pupils examined pieces of the moon before designing rockets to launch in the playground.
- Pupils are being prepared well for life in modern Britain. All pupils attend the forest school, where they participate in activities which support both the curriculum and pupils' social, emotional and physical development well. Members of the local community visit regularly. They hear pupils read and undertake a variety of crafts with pupils. This is particularly beneficial for pupils who do not have extended family close by. Pupils learn about fundamental British values such as tolerance and difference, for example through assemblies led by the local vicar. Some pupils have a less-secure understanding of the value of democracy than is typical.
- Numerous extra-curricular activities and clubs are available for pupils. Many learn to play a musical instrument, join football club or the school council. Educational visits, such as to a museum in Chichester, augment the curriculum well and broaden pupils'

horizons. During the inspection pupils participated in sports day. This was organised and run sensibly and responsibly by Year 6 pupils. There was a real community atmosphere, with large numbers of relatives supporting the pupils in their endeavours.

- The sports premium is used effectively to promote a variety of activities to keep pupils healthy and interested in a broader range of sports than they might otherwise have been able to access. Participation is high, including from disadvantaged pupils. Funding is also used appropriately to ensure that teachers have skills in teaching a wider variety of different sports.
- Subject leaders in English and Mathematics competently and knowledgeably ensure that teaching in these subjects is effective. Their monitoring of pupils' work and support for their colleagues is ensuring that pupils' progress has improved over time, particularly for the most able. Leaders' plans to further improve the teaching of writing are well thought out.
- Leaders have improved the quality of provision in the early years over time. The environment is well thought out to ensure that children have opportunities to develop skills across the curriculum. Adults make sure that children make better progress than they have in the past. However, provision in the early years requires improvement because some pupils do not make enough progress, particularly boys in writing. Recent turbulence in staffing has meant that the quality of teaching is not consistently good.

Governance of the school

- Chichester University Academy Trust provide highly effective support and challenge to school leaders. They have ensured that school self-evaluation and identified areas for improvement are sharply focused so that the school has improved steadily since it became an academy.
- The trust has made sure that members of the local governing body are increasingly well trained and understand how to carry out their statutory duties appropriately. Governors have a broad understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, for example through attending pupil progress meetings, where they ask useful questions to make sure that funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent appropriately.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Adults are well trained in child protection procedures and know what to do if they have a concern about a child's safety. Leaders ensure that help from outside agencies is accessed promptly for pupils who need it. They keep clear and detailed records of concerns, actions and outcomes.
- Leaders make sure that safer recruitment procedures are followed effectively. Appropriate checks are carried out on adults who work in the school and recorded accurately on the single central record.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school and in their community. They

understanding the need to be careful online, and know to tell an adult if they are concerned about anything. Parents confirm that their children feel safe and happy in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good and improving. This is because teachers use assessment information particularly well to identify accurately what pupils can already do and what they need to do next. Teachers' effective planning for pupils' next steps means that pupils make more progress than they have in the past, particularly the most able pupils.
- Teachers use questions effectively to make sure that pupils understand new concepts. They address misconceptions quickly and carefully build on pupils' prior learning so that pupils feel well supported and confident when attempting harder work.
- Pupils work hard in lessons and persevere when work is difficult. They refer to school characters, known as 'fernits', to explain the skills they need to help them learn. In Year 4, pupils enthusiastically practised being systematic when creating 'factor bugs', finding factors for numbers up to 100. Pupils told inspectors, 'Thinking fernit gets involved and concentrates. Climber fernit is always willing to have a go.'
- Teachers and teaching assistants carefully adapt their teaching to make sure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively to make good progress. Similarly, extra help provided for disadvantaged pupils is targeted well to diminish any differences between their attainment and that of their peers.
- Teaching in mathematics is increasingly effective as a result of leaders' actions. Effective training provided by the Chichester Academy Trust and regular monitoring and support from senior and middle leaders have enabled teachers to meet the demands of the mathematics curriculum better.
- Pupils throughout the school use mathematical equipment to help them work out challenging problems. This has increased the confidence of girls in particular, so that they now make more progress than they have in the past.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school. Teachers' planning makes sure that pupils are supported to make good progress from their starting points, with the most able pupils reading increasingly harder texts. For example, in Year 1, most-able pupils read books together, discussing the content of the story with an adult. Meanwhile, some pupils who need extra help with phonics worked with a teacher to decipher words and use them correctly in a sentence.
- An increasingly consistent approach to teaching writing is leading to improved outcomes for pupils, particularly girls. Pupils appreciate teachers' feedback, which helps them to understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils enjoy writing for different purposes. They carefully edit their work to produce good-quality writing with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. In Year 5, pupils acted as 'Moon ambassadors' when writing a report for pupils in Year 1. They had a keen understanding of the audience they were writing for, using an appropriate range

of grammar and punctuation to engage their readers.

- Leaders' effective help and support have reduced inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. However, from time to time, some teaching does not stretch pupils' understanding well enough, particularly in writing. Occasionally, when teaching is less strong, some pupils lose focus or get overexcited. When this happens, progress slows and pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The vast majority of pupils are confident, enthusiastic and motivated to learn. They are happy to talk to adults about their school and their learning. There is an open culture where pupils are happy to discuss how they feel.
- In an assembly, pupils in Year 1 talked about moving into Year 2. They reflected well on their achievements this year, valuing sharing their happy memories with each other, as well as their anxieties about the year to come.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a nurturing, calm start and end to the day. Pupils of different ages talk and play together happily. In the breakfast club, older pupils responsibly help younger ones to make their breakfasts.
- Leaders ensure that pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils attend a broad range of sporting clubs and extra-curricular activities. All pupils eat fruit as a healthy snack and in Reception pupils are given milk to drink if they want it.
- A few parents expressed concerns about bullying. Pupils understand that bullying is wrong. They confirmed that bullying of any kind was not tolerated. School records show that incidents of bullying are very rare, but that if bullying does happen it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. As one pupil said, 'Children are kind here.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well both inside and outside of lessons. Pupils are friendly towards each other and happy to celebrate in each other's successes, for example when pupils' work is displayed on the 'wow wall'.
- Behaviour of pupils has improved over time as a result of effective use of rewards and sanctions. Pupils especially appreciate the class rewards they achieve for showing positive behaviour around the school and to each other.
- Attendance is consistently in line with the national average. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is above that of other pupils. Although attendance has declined slightly this year, leaders' hard work to make sure that parents understand the importance of their children attending school regularly is ongoing. Leaders monitor attendance well and act quickly to reduce the number of pupils persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' outcomes across the school have improved steadily since the school became an academy, as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching. Pupils now make good progress across a broad range of subjects.
- In 2016, pupils at key stage 2 made average rates of progress in mathematics and reading. Consequently, a similar proportion of pupils to the national average attained the expected standard in mathematics, with a higher than average proportion achieving the expected standard in reading. However, pupils made slower progress in writing so that fewer than average attained the expected standard. Proportions achieving the higher standard in reading, writing or mathematics were below average.
- Current pupils in key stage 2 have made more rapid progress than they have in the past, so that more pupils are attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Larger proportions are now achieving the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because teachers have stepped up their use of assessment information to plan to meet pupils' needs more precisely.
- In 2016, pupils in key stage 1 attained standards broadly in line with those seen nationally in English and mathematics. However, not enough of the most able pupils exceeded age-related expectations. Pupils currently in key stage 1 have made faster progress so that higher proportions, including the most able, have reached the greater depth standard.
- Pupils' achievement in phonics has improved consistently so that higher than average proportions meet the standards of the phonics screening check in Year 1. This is because the teaching of phonics has improved. Leaders make sure that any pupil who does not meet the standard in Year 1 is supported effectively, so that by the end of Year 2 nearly all pupils have caught up with their peers.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their peers. This year leaders have made sure that improved proportions of the most able disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress to achieve the high standard in key stage 2 and the greater depth standard in key stage 1, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are carefully helped to make good progress. Many achieve standards in line with their peers.
- Pupils typically read well. They read regularly at home and at school. Pupils are assisted in choosing books that are well suited to their ability. Many can summarise stories accurately and make appropriate predictions about what might happen next.
- Most-able pupils read challenging texts with expression. Pupils who need it receive regular extra help so that they are making more progress than in the past. They use their phonics knowledge with increasing confidence to help them to sound out unfamiliar words.
- In the past, girls have made slower progress than boys in reading and mathematics. Leaders have addressed this so that girls now make more rapid progress in these subjects.
- In writing, progress has accelerated for both boys and girls, as a result of more-consistent teaching of writing across the curriculum and in all years. However, leaders

know that progress needs to accelerate still further so that pupils achieve even more highly by the end of key stage 2.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of provision in the early years, although improving, is not yet good. This is because teaching over time requires improvement. Children do not make as much progress as they should, particularly in writing.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. Consequently, boys especially do not make as much progress as they should in writing.
- Although children enter the early years with skills and knowledge similar to that typical for their age, some of them underachieve. Rates of progress slowed during the year as a result of turbulence in staffing. However, extra support provided by leaders ensured that children's progress accelerated in the latter part of the year so that a similar proportion to that seen nationally achieved a good level of development.
- Some children are not developing their social and communication skills quickly enough. Most children include each other in their play, take turns well and know to say 'please' and 'thank you' without being reminded. However, sometimes children do not listen to each other or adults carefully enough. For example, when reading a story to the class the teacher had to stop and pause repeatedly until everyone was paying attention.
- Leaders have overseen improvements to the early years effectively. A revamped outside environment ensures that children have access to rich activities which match appropriately the areas of the curriculum. Activities hold children's interest and develop their skills well. For example, children worked together cooperatively, using their problem-solving skills to create a water slide which sped up the movement of toy ducks. Adults' careful questioning about different speeds helped to develop children's vocabulary and early scientific understanding.
- Safeguarding is effective. Adults are well trained and liaise effectively with outside agencies where necessary to ensure that children are safe. Children with high levels of need are supported effectively. Children are taught to manage risk well, for example when walking down steps to the outside area and when climbing on the climbing frame.
- Children develop their numeracy skills well. Children practised addition and subtraction when putting teddy bears on a bus. They weighed potatoes grown on the school site to see which was the heaviest.
- Leaders have made sure that assessment of what children know, understand and can do is more accurate than it has been in the past. This has helped leaders to identify which children are not prepared well enough for their transition into Year 1. Leaders have planned carefully extra teaching and support for these children. This is helping to accelerate their progress so that they will be able to access the Year 1 curriculum successfully.

School details

Unique reference number	141266
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10032478

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	University of Chichester Academy trust
Chair	Christopher Lloyd
Acting Headteacher	Libby Isaac
Telephone number	01428 653144
Website	www.fernhurst.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	head@fernhurst.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Fernhurst Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in seven classes, all of which cater for different age groups.
- The school converted to become an academy in September 2014. It is part of the University of Chichester Academy Trust.
- In April 2017, the deputy headteacher became acting headteacher after the previous headteacher left the school. She has been supported in her leadership role by both the multi-academy trust and the newly appointed headteacher, who is due to take up her role in September 2017.
- The majority of pupils are of White British origin. A smaller than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who qualify for special educational needs support is broadly average. A larger than average proportion of pupils have a statement of special

educational needs and/or disabilities or an education, health and care plan.

- The school runs a breakfast club which is open before school, and an after-school club called 'Oscars'.
- There is a private pre-school on site. This is not managed by the school and is inspected separately.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of year 6.
- The school uses no providers of alternative provision.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 16 lessons, most of them jointly with the acting headteacher or members of the academy trust.
- Inspectors observed pupils playing in the playground and taking part in an assembly. Inspectors talked to pupils formally and informally in lessons.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents who attended sports day and the 49 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire Parent View, including free-text responses.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, other staff, governors and representatives from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors examined the school's website and scrutinised a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, governors' minutes, monitoring records, school policies, pupils' performance information and records relating to behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Helen Johns

Ofsted Inspector

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