

Adisham Church of England Primary School

The Street, Adisham, Canterbury, Kent CT3 3JW

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and trust leadership team have a clear and ambitious vision. It penetrates through every layer of the school so that everyone is working together effectively. This has resulted in outstanding provision.
- Parents and governors value the small, 'family' atmosphere of the school. They also recognise how belonging to the wider trust has facilitated high-quality training for staff and increased opportunities for pupils.
- Strengthening middle leadership is driving the school forward highly effectively for all groups of pupils, especially in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development forms the bedrock of this outstanding school. The core values of friendship, compassion, trust and truth are woven through the curriculum and everyday life at school. Pupils behave impeccably.
- The rich curriculum engages pupils extremely well in their learning. In addition to developing subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding, it offers pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop and further extend their writing skills. Leaders acknowledge that pupils' mathematical skills are not developed and applied well enough in other subjects.
- Teachers and support staff have secure subject knowledge that helps them to develop pupils' thinking. They provide just the right amount of challenge so that pupils are excited by learning and make rapid rates of progress from their different starting points.
- Adults' questioning is highly effective in assessing pupils' understanding and extending their thinking. Pupils provide articulate responses, exemplifying their reasoning. This helps learning to move at a rapid pace and ensures any misconceptions are identified.
- Pupils attain well across the curriculum. In 2016, outcomes were above national figures in reading, writing and mathematics at both key stages 1 and 2. The small numbers of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided for well. They make at least good, and often rapid, progress.
- Highly effective phonics teaching has ensured that all pupils have reached the required standard in Year 1 over the last three years.
- Outstanding teaching and a range of exciting activities, both inside and out, ensure that children get off to a flying start in the early years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen and embed opportunities to enhance pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in using mathematics across the wider curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher, together with trust leaders, has ensured that standards are high across all areas of the school's work. School improvement initiatives arise from rigorous analysis of a wide range of information. High-quality training is delivered to all staff and improvements are closely tracked and monitored to ensure that they are working. As a result, improvement strategies are very effective and pupils' achievement is rising.
- Policies are understood by all staff and applied with consistency. Thus, pupils are supported in making rapid progress. The planning and teaching of writing has a consistent emphasis on sentence construction and vocabulary development across the school.
- Middle leaders benefit from the leadership and mentoring provided by colleagues across the trust. For example, the science leader has worked alongside another leader to ensure that the pupils' work is of a high standard. Support for middle leaders in monitoring teaching and tracking pupils' progress effectively ensures that pupils have the skills that prepare them well for the next stages of their education.
- Leaders facilitate effective regular moderation of work across the wider trust. This practice is valued by teachers and helps to ensure that standards across year groups and subjects are high in relation to age-related expectations.
- Performance management targets for all staff are linked closely to school development planning. Targets are reviewed regularly to drive the school forward.
- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively to support the needs of the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils, who are making similar rates of progress to their peers who have the same starting points.
- The additional sports funding has been used appropriately. Provision has been improved so that there is a greater variety, quality and uptake of activities.
- Leaders are highly effective in ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified, and that the right provision is in place to help them to succeed. Special educational needs funding is put to good use. Leaders pay close attention to securing success for these pupils, both in the classroom and in the wider life of the school. Parents appreciate the effectiveness of this leadership and provision. One response to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, which was typical, said: 'My child has special needs and the school have been extremely helpful and supportive. They have been brilliant during the process of diagnosis and done everything to support him in school.'
- The exciting curriculum is enjoyed by pupils. Topics such as 'the Titanic' capture their interest and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding well in science, humanities and creative areas. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and clubs. Pupils are enabled to play a part in shaping the curriculum. For example, a recent topic extended into another term and developed to include more art and poetry in response to pupils' feedback. Opportunities to extend writing skills across the curriculum are plentiful and of a high standard. Leaders acknowledge that the

curriculum is not exploited fully to apply mathematical learning.

- A rich seam of spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision weaves through the curriculum and the daily life of the school. The four core Christian values of the school, friendship, compassion, trust and truth, are part of every day for pupils. These values thread through assemblies and exercises, such as reflecting on which value is the most important, how the values can be exemplified in school and suggesting what a fifth value might be.
- Leaders ensure that other aspects of fundamental British values, such as the understanding of democracy and the rule of law, are promoted through special focus weeks. Examples include opportunities for pupils to vote about how to invest funds during the popular 'My money week' and topics such as Bonfire Night.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and are ambitious for every pupil at Adisham.
- They have a clear understanding of their strategic role, and how this operates independently from the trust.
- Minutes of meetings show how governors use a wide range of information, including pupils' progress information, to hold school leaders accountable for the progress of all groups of pupils across the school. They ask searching questions about the spending of funds such as the sports premium funding and the pupil premium grant to ensure that these funds are spent wisely and are making a difference for pupils.
- Governors are highly committed to the role. They attend training and locality meetings that support them in ensuring that the governing body has the skills and up-to-date information necessary to provide both support and challenge for school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All necessary checks and systems are in place to help keep pupils safe. Leaders and governors check regularly to ensure that everything is up to date and that the correct procedures are followed.
- Parents are confident that the school keeps their children safe. All the parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, felt that their children were safe. Pupils feel safe and secure at school. They know who to go to if they have concerns, and feel confident that any concerns would be listened to and acted upon.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe online is effective. Older pupils are trained as e-safety ambassadors to help younger pupils to understand key messages.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge across the curriculum. This ensures that they explain key concepts confidently, break down learning into small steps, and can extend and support pupils where needed.
- Adults' questioning is highly effective in assessing pupils' learning and extending their thinking. Many questions necessitate the use of higher-order thinking skills, challenging pupils to explain why they think things and provide examples. As a result, pupils are articulate and thoughtful.
- Expectations across the school are high. Work in the books of even the youngest pupils shows neat presentation and meticulous attention to detail. Pupils are rightly proud of their work.
- Teaching assistants have developed their subject knowledge successfully through high-quality training and are highly effective in supporting pupils, including the most able. In a Year 5/6 problem-solving mathematics lesson, the challenge for the most able provided by the questioning of the teaching assistant was well matched to the pupils' needs. Because of this, the engagement and enjoyment of the pupils was palpable and progress was rapid.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively supported by highly skilled staff in all aspects of school life. This includes physical education, assembly and playtime. Consequently, these pupils are fully included, happy and make good or better progress from their starting points.
- Writing is of an exceptionally high standard across the school. The focus on grammatical skill and oracy has resulted in pupils mastering the craft of writing from an early age. Pupils hone their skills through rich opportunities to write at length for real purposes across a variety of subjects.
- Pupils read widely and with understanding and enjoyment. Comprehension skills are taught with a meticulous precision that ensures understanding of both texts and literary devices. For example, in a Year 3/4 comprehension lesson pupils focused on the term 'frozen with fear'. The teacher skilfully developed pupils' understanding of the term, discussing how computer screens and ice could freeze and then using movement to help pupils to understand the term within the context of the text.
- Pupils have a good grasp of key mathematical concepts such as place value. They know and apply their times tables and number facts. Mathematical reasoning is a consistent part of mathematics teaching and this means that pupils enjoy solving problems and mathematical challenges. While opportunities to apply mathematical skills across the wider curriculum are not as prevalent as they are in English, there are some opportunities for data handling in science and in the Year 5/6 Titanic topic, where compass points and co-ordinates are used.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Staff know pupils well as individuals and have built up trusting and warm relationships with them. Pupils know that they are well cared for. Referring to staff, they told inspectors that, 'People are nice: they help us.'
- Nurture provision supports pupils successfully, both in dealing with the challenges of learning, and the social environment of the playground. Provision is tracked closely and monitored to ensure that it is effective.
- Parents trust staff to look after their children. All the parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, felt that their children were happy and well cared for. Comments made acknowledge that the school 'goes the extra mile' to look after pupils and that this results in high levels of well-being. One comment, typical of those received, was, 'My child goes in and out of school beaming.'
- During the well-run breakfast club, pupils learn independence skills, including buttering their own toast and applying toppings. They select activities, such as tennis that was inspired by Wimbledon, and interact with their peers from across the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are polite and respectful in and around school. They know the importance of the school's values of friendship, compassion, trust and truth. They reflect on ways that they exemplify these values by helping their friends and getting along well together.
- In lessons, pupils take responsibility for their own learning. They get on with the task in hand and enjoy opportunities to offer feedback to help others to improve. For example, in a Year 1/2 art lesson about pointillism, pupils offered supportive feedback to each other about the effective application of the colours used and technique applied.
- At playtime, pupils participate in a wide range of activities such as table tennis, netball and the adventure trail. They enjoy socialising together and are supportive and kind towards each other. For example, during the inspection the Year 6 play leaders supported younger pupils in making an obstacle course, allowing them to choose the equipment that they wanted and emphasising the need to help put it away afterwards!
- Pupils are clear that bullying is not a problem at school. They understand the difference between bullying and friendship disagreements. They are confident that staff would help resolve any problems that occurred.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make rapid progress across the curriculum from high starting points. As a result, outcomes are outstanding.
- Work in pupils' books shows consistently well-developed knowledge, skills and

understanding across a wide range of subjects. Pupils' development is supported by logically connected learning opportunities across subjects, especially in science, where pupils learn to apply and extend their skills.

- In 2016, attainment was above national figures in reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2. Proportions of pupils working at greater depth were in line with or above national figures in writing and mathematics at key stage 2 and above national averages in all areas in key stage 1. Provisional figures for 2017 indicate further improvement so that pupils are very well prepared for secondary school.
- Recent work to develop pupils' reading skills across the school has been effective. High standards have been raised even further and school information indicates that a greater proportion of pupils than previously will attain higher levels this year.
- Writing is a particular strength of the school. In 2016, key stage 2 writing progress measures were in the top 10% nationally. During the inspection, it was evident that this success starts in Reception, with high expectations and a rich writing environment. As pupils move up through the school, they are provided with a myriad of rich opportunities to apply and extend their writing skills.
- The small numbers of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good, and often accelerated, rates of progress from their starting points. This is because outstanding teaching and well-targeted support ensure that their needs are met.
- Phonics is taught highly effectively. As a result, all pupils have attained the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 for the last three years.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children typically enter Reception with skills above those that are expected for their age. They make rapid progress from these high starting points so that more children than nationally attain a good level of development. Their work shows levels of attainment that are often well above what is typical for their ages. Children are prepared well for transition into Year 1.
- The environment is highly engaging and stimulating inside and out. Children have created their own science garden with a mud kitchen, plants and a bug hotel which supports their learning about mini-beasts. During the inspection, children were engaged in making a giant spider's web from sticky tape and exploring the way mini-beasts move.
- No opportunity to celebrate, support and extend learning is missed. The walls reflect high-quality writing experiences such as writing alternative endings for the traditional tale 'The gingerbread man'. Other current displays invite children to research mini-beast environments and record what else is needed in the nearby mini-beast habitat.
- Children extend their thinking effectively through investigation. For example, during the inspection a child who had been finding out about how quickly snails move told the inspector how he would investigate this during independent time using carpet and wood as different surfaces.
- Staff have ensured that children are aware of how to work together safely. A child

getting a large length of piping to create a water pathway stated, 'I must carry it carefully so I don't hit anyone.'

- Highly skilled staff facilitate learning through carefully phrased questions. Observing the pipe waterway, which did not work, the teacher asked the child how he could alter it to make the water flow. After some consideration and exploration, the waterway was built successfully.
- Children of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make rapid progress because tasks are well matched to their needs. For example, during a highly effective phonics lesson children considered 'tricky' words. Following the teacher's input, some children extended their knowledge by writing sentences using the words, while others consolidated their learning with a 'skittles' word game. A third group found words in the sand and worked with an adult to ensure that their pronunciation of words such as 'the' was accurate.
- Leadership of the early years is highly effective. Parents appreciate the effective systems in place to support their children's transition into school, such as the 'rising 4s' sessions. They value the stay-and-play opportunities and enjoy the 'homework' activities, such as finding books by a certain author in the library or making fish together. Comments made to the inspector by parents and on the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, are typified by the parent who said, 'I could not have hoped for a better place for the education of my children.'

School details

Unique reference number	141308
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10032943

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	John Peter Spooner
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Jobe
Telephone number	01304 840246
Website	www.adisham.kent.sch.uk
Email address	adisham@stouracademytrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- 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.
- The school converted to become an academy in September 2014, when it became part of the Stour Academy Trust. The trust had assumed leadership of the school prior to conversion in February 2013.
- Prior to conversion, the school was inspected in October 2013, when the overall effectiveness was judged to be good.
- The current headteacher took up post in September 2016. She is supported by the deputy chief executive officer from the trust.

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are lower than those found nationally. Few pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school provides a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons in all classes, spoke to pupils, heard them read and looked at work in their exercise books. Observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed in and around school, before school in breakfast club, and on the playground.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, a group of pupils, and members of the governing body.
- A range of documents were looked at, including information about pupils' achievement, the leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness, plans for improvement and records concerning pupils' safety.
- The inspector spoke to parents on the playground and considered 36 responses, and 34 free-text responses, to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector also took into account eight responses to the staff questionnaire and 16 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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