

Minchinhampton Primary Academy

School Road, Minchinhampton, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 9BP

Inspection dates

12–13 September 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, ably supported by his leadership team and governors, provides inspiring and determined leadership. Leaders' work ensures that the school has a purposeful learning environment where teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils benefit from effective teaching and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment across the school is above national figures as a result.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is well organised. Pupils receive carefully tailored support that enables them to make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, make good progress because of well-targeted teaching and effective personal support.
- The most able pupils are challenged well in their learning so that they reach high standards.
- On occasions, some pupils find the work set too difficult, especially in mathematics, and this slows their progress.
- Children make good progress in early years because of well-planned provision. The large majority acquire the knowledge and skills they need to start Year 1 as confident learners.
- Behaviour is good. The school is successful in promoting positive attitudes to learning and pupils are keen to succeed.
- Pupils say that they feel extremely safe in school because staff look after them very well. They enjoy the activities that school life has to offer, including an extensive variety of extra-curricular clubs.
- Parents praise the work of the school, especially the great dedication shown by staff in caring for pupils.
- Governors have a good knowledge of how well the school is doing because they check regularly for themselves. This enables them to provide effective challenge to senior leaders.
- Performance management systems are fully in place. However, they lack the necessary rigour to ensure that pupils' achievement can be even stronger.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers consistently take account of the needs of all pupils when planning learning, especially in mathematics.
- Improve systems of performance management so that teachers know what is expected of them in their efforts to further raise pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils and strive to ensure that they receive the best education possible. New strategies introduced since the inspection of the predecessor school have been successful in improving teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and inspires the staff, governors and pupils to believe in themselves and the school. Staff are proud to work at this school and pupils have a keen desire to learn.
- The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate. The headteacher and governors use the expertise available to them through the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust to help validate their judgements. Improvement plans have a clear focus, enabling leaders to monitor and evaluate the impact of their work easily.
- Leaders acknowledge the invaluable support from the trust's advisers and other consultants. They appreciate the opportunities to work alongside leaders from other schools in the trust to share effective practice. This partnership work has ensured that teachers' assessments of pupils' achievement are thorough and accurate.
- Senior and middle leaders have introduced effective strategies to improve teaching, especially in English and mathematics. They provide a wide range of staff development and training opportunities for staff in order to improve their effectiveness.
- Leaders regularly check teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. However, systems for managing staff performance are not sufficiently rigorous. Teachers lack precise targets to help them improve their work and further raise outcomes for pupils.
- The curriculum provides good breadth and balance, with an interesting variety of extra-curricular clubs. Enrichment activities, such as residential visits, visiting authors and artists, and other cultural events, help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Homework is well planned and supports learning in lessons effectively.
- The school's values, such as compassion and tolerance, which incorporate British values, lie at the heart of the school's work. Staff and pupils demonstrate empathy and understanding through their very effective relationships, preparing them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well and tackles discrimination of any kind. Well-planned support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is successful in promoting good progress. Careful use of funding ensures that pupils are fully included in school life.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to provide high-quality support. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils, including those who are the most able, are successful personally and in their learning.

- Leaders also use the physical education and sport premium effectively, providing a wide range of sporting opportunities for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Staff develop their skills through working alongside experienced colleagues and specialist coaches.
- Parents are very positive about the work of the school and praise the approachability of staff. They are fully supportive of new initiatives and all that leaders are trying to achieve. They are appreciative of the good levels of communication that exist between home and school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are a tightly focused group and organise their work well to provide effective support and challenge to leaders. They appreciate the greater collaboration that now exists between school leaders within the trust. They use the advice from the trust's advisers to ensure that their judgements are accurate and that they are suitably trained to carry out their responsibilities.
- Governors have good understanding of the quality of teaching and how well different groups of pupils are achieving compared with others nationally, as well as across the trust. Governors set strategic targets for the headteacher's performance in consultation with the trust's adviser. They know how the performance of staff is managed to reward effective practice and how any underperformance is tackled promptly. However, they have not probed deeply enough to ensure that performance management systems have the capacity to bring about further improvements in teaching and learning.
- Governors monitor the school's budget closely to ensure that funds support improvements to teaching and learning. They have a clear understanding of how additional funds are spent to help disadvantaged pupils and to develop sport in school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a culture where safety and support for pupils' welfare are of high priority. They check regularly that policies and systems are followed diligently and are effective. Recruitment and vetting procedures for appointing staff follow the statutory guidance stringently. Staff receive regular training in the latest requirements for safeguarding, including how to keep pupils safe from extremism and radicalisation. This ensures that they are very clear about how to report any concerns about pupils. All risks are thoroughly assessed by leaders and updated regularly, for example with regard to fire safety, first aid and educational visits.
- School staff know the families of children who attend Minchinhampton well, especially any whose circumstances make them vulnerable. This enables staff to keep a close eye on pupils' well-being. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure the safety of pupils, such as the educational welfare officer to promote regular attendance for pupils. Most parents agree that their children are safe in school and are very well looked after by staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers have successfully implemented new approaches to meet the latest requirements in assessing pupils' progress. They inspire pupils to be successful through effective strategies to develop good concentration and resilience as learners.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. They plan interesting tasks to capture pupils' attention. This is recognised by parents who describe the teaching as having 'a sprinkle of brilliance'. Pupils say that they work hard in lessons and appreciate the helpful guidance from teachers about how to improve their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in providing useful support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They help pupils manage their feelings well and build their confidence as learners.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, benefit from very precise support. This helps them to catch up to their classmates and achieve well.
- The most able pupils are suitably challenged in their learning because teachers set demanding tasks that stretch their thinking. For example, when teaching about place value, teachers expect pupils to explain their ideas clearly using the correct mathematical terms.
- Reading is extremely well taught and pupils quickly develop a love of literature. Teachers encourage pupils to regularly discuss their reading, which develops comprehension skills effectively.
- The teaching of writing is effective and teachers ensure that pupils practise their skills across a range of writing in other subjects. Pupils are rightly proud of a book they wrote and published, 'A portal through time', in collaboration with an established author. All pupils contributed to its creation, inspiring them to become authors and illustrators themselves.
- Teaching in mathematics is effective in ensuring that pupils acquire and develop competence in calculation skills. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to extend their mathematical thinking through investigations and problem solving.
- Occasionally, teachers do not tailor the work to take full account of the needs of all the pupils in their class. This limits pupils' progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Warm and very effective relationships characterise the school's culture, making this an extremely welcoming and orderly environment in which to learn. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive that they feel safe and happy in school. Parents appreciate the strong, caring ethos as well as the interesting curriculum that 'gets the best out of

children,' as one parent put it.

- Pupils understand very clearly about the different sorts of bullying, including the use of racist name-calling and derogatory language. They have confidence that staff will sort out any problems should they occur. They say that they would stand up for others because they believe that bullying is always wrong.
- Pupils judge this to be a fair school where everyone is valued and treated equally well. They have a good respect for, and a developing awareness of, people of other faiths and cultures. This shows their developing understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Online safety is given a high priority and pupils are taught how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils are aware not to reveal personal details and to report cyber bullying if it occurs. 'Tell, tell and tell again,' is their mantra.
- Pupils undertake a wide range of responsibilities in school with a great sense of pride. For example, 'learning ambassadors' greet visitors to classrooms and explain the learning for that lesson very sensibly and maturely.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well mannered and friendly. They show a genuine interest in visitors and speak enthusiastically about the school and their achievements. They listen politely and talk respectfully to staff and to each other. They show good empathy, particularly towards pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Most pupils concentrate hard in lessons and strive to achieve well. Parents and staff are positive about standards of behaviour. The school's records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour. The very small number of pupils who have poor behaviour are managed well.
- Occasionally, some pupils lose concentration and are inattentive in lessons, slowing down progress. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their regular attendance and punctuality.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Achievement is good for all groups of pupils across the curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics. Attainment is above national figures in key stage 1 and key stage 2, both at the expected standards for their age and at the higher standards. This prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, make good and sometimes better progress than others in school from similar starting points. Extra help to build self-confidence and improve skills in English and mathematics is successful in speeding up academic progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their support is carefully planned and provides small steps to meet their sometimes complex needs. Pupils are proud of their achievements and keen to try their best.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress as

their work is consistently challenging. They articulate their ideas very clearly and justify their thinking well. For example, when discussing poetry, Year 4 pupils thoughtfully and maturely explained the effect of using abstract nouns.

- Pupils read with fluency and confidence, using their phonics knowledge and skills well to read unknown words successfully. The library is the hub of the school and pupils enjoy reading across the wide range of books on offer. The skills of the most able readers are extended well through the high-quality books available in each classroom.
- Pupils write regularly and at length across a range of subjects. They use their skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling to good effect when writing for a variety of purposes, such as a diary entry about the Great Fire of London in history.
- Pupils demonstrate effective calculation skills and a good understanding in all aspects of mathematics. They apply their knowledge and skills to investigating mathematical problems with increasing success.
- On occasions, the progress of some pupils is limited because the work planned does not take full account of their needs.

Early years provision

Good

- Parents appreciate the effective arrangements for starting school. These ensure that children settle quickly into new routines, behave well and enjoy their learning. Parents speak highly of the approachability of staff and welcome the opportunities to contribute to their children's learning.
- Most children start school with the knowledge and skills that are broadly typical of those seen for their age. From their starting points, children make good progress across all areas of learning. As they leave Reception, the number of children who achieve a good level of development is above national figures. Most children start Year 1 as confident learners.
- Teachers make learning interesting to capture children's attention. For example, teachers were effective in developing children's mental arithmetic skills during a game of hopscotch.
- Children benefit from well-planned teaching in phonics, which underpins early reading skills effectively. Children's achievement is monitored closely and teaching is adjusted to increase progress. Over the past year, teachers have introduced a range of new activities to increase boys' interest in writing to good effect.
- Leaders regularly check on children's progress and use this information to plan learning that meets the needs of disadvantaged children well, particularly in their personal development. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs identified at an early stage. The school works well with other agencies to ensure that their needs are met effectively, for example in developing their speech and language.
- The most able children are usually suitably challenged in their learning. Occasionally, the work planned does not extend a few children's thinking to the full.
- Good leadership and management have created a staff team that works well together. Staff receive appropriate training so that they support children's learning effectively.

The leader keeps the learning environment under constant review to ensure that it continues to stimulate and excite children's curiosity.

- Safety and welfare are given good emphasis. Staff supervise children well at all times. Children are encouraged to take responsibility and develop independence, for example in putting their own straws in their milk cartons and clearing up after snack time.

School details

Unique reference number	141547
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10036965

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	349
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Kenny Lynch
Headteacher	Nick Moss
Telephone number	01453 883273
Website	www.minchacademy.net
Email address	head@minchschoo.net
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 met the government's floor standards in 2016.
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised in 11 classes, some of which are mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school became an academy as part of the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust in November 2014.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place over two days. Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, and some observations were in conjunction with the headteacher. In addition, they made visits to classrooms, the dining hall, and the playground, as well as attending an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with two advisers from the academy trust, who support the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 91 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as consulting informally with parents at the end of the school day. They also took account of the 21 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. They examined information on current pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding procedures and the plans for the use of the physical education and sport premium.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them in classrooms and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Patricia Dodds	Ofsted Inspector
Maddy Kent	Ofsted Inspector

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