

Alderbury and West Grimstead Church of England Primary School

Firs Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 3BD

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing. The standard of writing throughout the school is not high enough.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is too slow because the pupil premium grant is not spent wisely to help disadvantaged pupils catch up.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across the school. As a result, many pupils have gaps in their knowledge.
- Throughout the school, boys do not achieve as well as girls in reading and writing.
- The early years requires improvement. Not enough children reach a good level of development, which means that they are not well prepared for Year 1.
- Over time, leaders and governors have not focused precisely enough on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils.

The school has the following strengths:

- The new headteacher has the confidence of staff, pupils, parents and governors. He and his new leadership team have made a good start in improving teaching and standards.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum. They enjoy coming to school and love learning.
- Progress in reading and mathematics has improved and is now similar to that of most schools nationally.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and are well looked after by adults. Their parents are confident that the school looks after them well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite and work well with each other and with adults. Pupils usually pay attention well in class.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of writing so that pupils make faster progress and reach high standards by:
 - ensuring that senior and middle leaders closely monitor standards in writing and intervene quickly if progress slows
 - ensuring that teachers throughout the school have the highest expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and challenge them to produce a high standard of work consistently
 - improving the teaching of phonics in the early years and Year 1 in order to lay good foundations for early reading and writing skills.
- Ensure that disadvantaged pupils make better progress so that they quickly catch up with the other children by:
 - governors, leaders and teachers closely monitoring the progress of disadvantaged pupils and ensuring that extra help is given if progress slows
 - targeting the pupil premium funding so that it is spent on raising the attainment of pupils.
- Ensure that the standard of teaching is consistently good throughout the school by making sure that:
 - senior and middle leaders focus on outcomes for pupils
 - teachers have a better understanding of the school's assessment data to identify when pupils and groups of pupils are making insufficient progress, so they can quickly adapt teaching to improve pupils' progress
 - teachers' planning takes into account the learning needs of boys as well as other groups
 - leaders provide teachers with opportunities to see what the best teaching looks like.
- Ensure that governors' and leaders' improvement plans are sharply focused on pupils' progress and attainment and monitored closely.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders and governors have not ensured good outcomes for all groups of pupils, or subjects across the school.
- The pupil premium is not used effectively to provide pupils with extra help and support to enable them to catch up.
- There has been a high turnover of leaders and governors; this has resulted in weaker areas not being addressed consistently.
- Current plans to improve the school are not sufficiently focused on pupils' progress, in particular that of disadvantaged pupils and boys. Monitoring of the plan concentrates on what actions have been taken or planned and not enough on the difference made to improving outcomes for pupils.
- The new headteacher has made a good start. He is beginning to raise standards in teaching by making his high expectations explicit. He was able to show some very early signs of improved pupil progress. The headteacher is fully aware that there is still much work to do to improve the school, and improvements are not yet embedded.
- The headteacher has successfully shared his enthusiasm for the school and he has the confidence of parents, pupils and staff. As a result, there is increased aspiration to ensure that pupils achieve well and continue to enjoy their learning.
- New middle leaders are quickly learning how to effectively carry out their roles. They have been looking closely at work in books, talking to pupils and undertaking learning walks. In addition, they are working closely with the headteacher to understand the school's assessment information. Middle leaders are enthusiastic about their roles, working with colleagues and playing their part in improving the school.
- The school's leadership for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, particularly for those pupils who have more complex needs, is good. The leader is knowledgeable and committed to providing good support. However, the responsibility for improving outcomes for this group of pupils rests largely with her. Class teachers do not take as much responsibility as they should for the progress of those pupils who require additional support to catch up.
- The local authority is currently giving the school a high level of support to drive improvement. This is appreciated by school leaders.
- The curriculum is rich and interesting. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their work. Examples of high-quality topic work were displayed around the school. The school has a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, drama and gardening clubs.
- School life and timetabled subjects contribute to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This is a strength of the school. Spiritual development is closely linked to the Christian ethos in the school. Social development was seen in pupils' positive attitudes to each other. Different cultures and faiths are valued. Pupils benefit from visitors of a variety of faiths coming into school to talk to them. These activities contribute to the promotion of British values, as does the opportunity to learn about

democracy by voting for the school council. Pupils learn about important dates like Remembrance Day.

- Most of the sport premium is used appropriately to increase the level of physical activity for pupils and to improve their well-being. Pupils engage in competitive events. The funding is used to provide training opportunities for staff. A small portion is not so well targeted, and the headteacher is currently reviewing how the money is spent to ensure maximum effect.
- Leaders and governors ensure that keeping pupils safe has a high priority in the school; they have developed a strong culture of safeguarding.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been effective in challenging the school to improve pupils' writing where pupils' progress has been weak for several years.
- Governors' plans do not focus sharply enough on improving progress for disadvantaged pupils and boys and monitoring how well these pupils are catching up with their peers.
- Governors are very supportive of the school and committed to its success. They are generous with their time and with offering practical help. They visit frequently and are in close contact with staff and leaders.
- Governors understand their responsibilities and check relevant aspects of school procedures, such as safeguarding and the safer recruitment of staff.
- The governors responsible for SEN and/or disabilities and safeguarding have had additional training and undertake their roles and responsibilities with enthusiasm.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher is the designated safeguarding lead and has two senior teachers as deputies. Record-keeping for safeguarding is good. There is evidence of concerns being followed up. For example, the local authority was challenged to give greater support to a family.
- All staff have undergone safeguarding training and know to whom to report concerns.
- The school checks carefully everyone who works with children or has contact with them.
- Children are taught how to keep safe on the roads and online. Anti-bullying posters reinforce children's understanding of personal safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Inconsistent teaching over time has resulted in some pupils making less progress than

they should, in particular disadvantaged pupils and boys.

- Expectations of what pupils can achieve have been too low, particularly in writing.
- Weak teaching in the past has led to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, some pupils do not have quick recall of number facts, which holds them back in their fluency in completing mathematical calculations.
- The teaching of phonics is not closely tailored to what pupils need to learn next. This has resulted in fewer pupils being successful in the phonics check than are found nationally.
- The standard of teaching is variable across the school. Pupils in some classes make less progress than those in others. The headteacher is working with teachers to improve teaching so that it is good in every class. However, improvements are not yet embedded and consistent.
- The teaching and support of pupils who have complex SEN and/or disabilities is good, resulting in good progress. However, those who just need some extra help to catch up are not given the help they require.
- The teaching of reading and mathematics has improved and, in 2017, pupils at the end of key stage 2 had made progress similar to the national average.
- Science is well taught throughout the school. Science lessons are engaging and pupils make good progress, resulting in high standards. Inspectors observed science investigations in both key stages 1 and 2 that challenged pupils to think hard. There was a strong link between science and mathematics. Standards that pupils achieve in science are good.
- Teachers ensure that lessons are interesting for their pupils. As a result, pupils are well engaged with their learning.
- Work in books is generally clear and set out well because teachers give good guidance on presentation, but the standard of handwriting is variable. Teachers review their pupils' work regularly. Pupils told the inspectors that they value the feedback their teachers give them through conversations, marking and written comments in their books.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards their education and they enjoy coming to school. They spoke enthusiastically about their learning, in particular about the interesting topic work they are doing. Pupils enjoy a wide range of learning experiences.
- Pupils concentrate well, even in lessons where the teaching is less strong. They were keen to show the inspectors their work and talk about their learning.
- Pupils enjoy taking on positions of responsibility, for example through the school

council or by being 'computer experts'. Even the youngest children have opportunities to be class monitors and are responsible, for example, for returning the register or distributing equipment.

- Pupils are polite to each other and to adults. Inspectors saw older pupils showing kindness and helping younger pupils at lunchtime.
- Pupils who have complex difficulties are well supported in school. Their specific needs are planned for, enabling them to thrive and integrate into the school community.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they feel safe in school and are well looked after by adults. This view is supported by parents and staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils attend well in lessons and respond quickly to instructions. Inspectors saw older pupils listening carefully to each other during discussions. Younger pupils share equipment and take turns in games.
- Behaviour at playtimes and when pupils are moving around the school is good. For example, pupils wait for each other to go through doorways and there is no pushing.
- Pupils are respectful to each other and adults. They told inspectors that there is very little name-calling or derogatory language. Pupils understand that people have different beliefs and spoke about this respectfully.
- Pupils, parents and staff said that bullying is rare. Pupils reported that any bad behaviour or bullying is dealt with well by the school.
- Attendance is similar to the national average. The school promotes good attendance to families and quickly follows up attendance issues.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress in writing is too slow across the school with the result that standards are below those of other pupils nationally. Pupils are not sufficiently challenged to reach the level in writing of which they are capable. Pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for the next stage of their education because low standards in writing hold them back.
- Disadvantaged pupils make slower progress than similar children nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupil premium funding is not spent wisely. It is not used to improve attainment and help disadvantaged pupils catch up.
- Throughout the school, boys make less progress than girls in reading and writing; they reach lower standards.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is improving, but remains below the national average. Not enough pupils who retake the test at the end of Year 2 have caught up.
- Progress in reading and mathematics improved in 2017. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress was similar to those in most schools nationally. The standard of

mathematics at the end of key stage 1 was high.

- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is variable. However, those pupils who have complex needs are given good support and make good progress from their starting points.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children join the school with skills and knowledge at the expected level for their age. They do not make enough progress from their starting points in the early years. A smaller proportion of pupils reach a good level of development than is found in most schools nationally. The weaker areas are writing and boys' attainment.
- The most able children are not given work which closely meets their needs. For example, some children are ready for more challenging phonics work to enable them to move ahead more quickly with early reading and writing skills.
- The leadership of early years requires improvement as the weaker areas have not been tackled effectively and have not improved over time. This has resulted in children not as well prepared for Year 1 as they should be.
- A wide range of activities are available to develop physical, social and academic skills and knowledge. However, children are not sufficiently directed to take advantage of these activities. For example, boys are not encouraged to take part in the wide range of learning activities made available to them.
- Children know what behaviour is expected of them. They understand about taking turns and listening to adults. Good behaviour was seen during whole-class teaching time.
- Attainment is good in the areas of communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development.
- Adults seize opportunities for incidental learning. For example, the teacher taught mathematical language when she discussed with the children how many were having school dinner and how many more were having packed lunch.
- Statutory requirements are met. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and child protection.
- Early years staff assess children thoroughly when they join the school. They keep good records of children's progress, which they share with parents.

School details

Unique reference number	126445
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10037854

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Fuller
Headteacher	Wesley Thorpe
Telephone number	01722 710464
Website	www.alderbury.wilts.sch.uk
Email address	head@alderbury.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27– 28 November 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Alderbury and West Grimstead is smaller than most primary schools. The school has one-form entry, so there are seven single-year-group classes.
- A large majority of pupils come from a White British background; only a small number do not have English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs is larger than found nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than that found in most schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club on site.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2017. At that time, the school's management team was reorganised.
- Several governors, including the chair, have been in post for two years or less.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in every class, and 15 lessons or parts of lessons were seen. An inspector took a learning walk with a senior member of staff to check the support and provision for disadvantaged pupils.
- Inspectors, together with the headteacher and literacy leader, reviewed the standards of work in pupils' books and looked at progress since September.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day, with governors, middle leaders, a representative from the local authority and with a group of pupils. An inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about books.
- Behaviour was observed in lessons, around the school and at break and lunchtimes.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including information about pupils' progress and attainment, records of the work of governors and plans to improve the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and records of attendance were reviewed. The school's systems for keeping children safe were checked.
- Inspectors took account of the 59 responses to Parent View, the online survey, together with comments made by parents. Eighteen responses to the staff survey and 51 responses to the pupil survey were considered alongside other evidence.

Inspection team

Janet Maul, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Bragg

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