

Amberley Church of England Primary School

School Road, Amberley, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9NB

Inspection dates

30–31 January 2018

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher's calm and ambitious vision to do the best for all of the pupils is supported fully by governors and staff.
- Leaders' work to improve the school is effective. They have ensured that teaching is of a high standard and pupils now achieve well.
- Developments in the quality of teaching have improved pupils' learning, most notably in reading and mathematics. Pupils make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Teachers extend pupils' mathematical understanding well. Pupils get a wide range of opportunities to apply and record their mathematical knowledge in problems and investigations.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are not always high enough. As a result, there are variations in the quality of pupils' writing.
- There are times when the level of challenge does not stretch pupils' thinking sufficiently. Teachers do not match work and questions precisely enough to pupils' skills and abilities.
- Children get a good start to their education in the Reception Year. Effective teaching means that children make rapid progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Amberley is a welcoming, friendly and inclusive school where pupils are happy, safe and settled. Staff are proud to work at the school.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is excellent. Staff are relentless in ensuring that pupils, especially the most vulnerable, are very well supported.
- Pupils behave well. They are motivated, listen attentively and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are used to good effect. Teachers are provided with relevant training to help them improve.
- Leaders provide a rich, diverse and exciting curriculum that enables pupils to gain a deep knowledge and understanding, and develop their skills, across all subjects.
- Governors are effective and know the school well. They have the skills and information to hold the school leaders to account.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. As a result, pupils feel safe and well cared for.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the education provided to their children. They appreciate how well the staff know and care for their children.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan learning that challenges pupils at an appropriate level, so that they make even more rapid progress
 - staff use questioning more consistently to deepen pupils' understanding
 - teachers have high expectations of pupils' written work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher leads with purpose and direction. His ambition for pupils to achieve the best outcomes is a constant feature of the effective leadership in the school. He is well supported by a cohesive team of staff. They know the school and the pupils well, and focus on appropriate priorities for improvement.
- The executive headteacher has had a determined focus on improving the quality of teaching and tackling weaknesses effectively. He, along with senior colleagues, has raised pupils' achievement. Through observations of lessons and checks on quality of work in pupils' books, leaders provide precise feedback to teachers on how they can improve their practice.
- Subject leaders are committed to bringing about improvements. They are clear about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in the areas for which they are responsible. Subject leaders have a clear and well-chosen set of actions, based on accurate self-evaluation, to raise achievement further. For example, the science leader is exceptionally well aware of where pupils' progress is slower and how to support teachers to address this.
- Leaders provide an exciting curriculum that ensures pupils make rapid progress, extending their knowledge across a wide range of subjects. This is because teachers use assessments effectively in a wide range of subjects, including history, geography and art. Teachers engage pupils at the start of a new topic by using interesting resources, including trips. Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs that stimulate their physical and emotional development. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the table tennis and capoeira (martial arts) clubs. One parent commented, 'The children have the opportunity to experience a really wide range of learning experiences, with frequent school trips and in-school enrichment activities, such as the African themed day.'
- The special educational needs (SEN) coordinator has a clear understanding of those pupils who require extra support. SEN funding is spent wisely. Interventions are put in place and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that pupils make good progress. A parent, describing the help given by the school, said, 'My child is on the SEN register and is well supported by the school.'
- The headteacher monitors the professional development of staff carefully. Training for staff is closely linked to the school's development priorities and pupils' outcomes. Information about how well pupils are doing in the school's detailed 'trackers' provide an additional check that training has improved teachers' skills and subject knowledge.
- Leaders are skilled in identifying the barriers to learning for the very small proportion of disadvantaged pupils. They use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that individual pupils' needs are met. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress, both academically and personally. Leaders focus on providing enrichment experiences, as well as academic, social and emotional support for pupils and their families.

- Leaders and governors make sure there is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through strong links with other schools and the church. At the heart of the school's work is the sharp focus on pupils' well-being. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to make decisions. They learn about modern Britain and understand the importance of playing their part as school, local and global citizens. Pupils learn and play very well together because staff model their high expectations of pupils with each other. Leaders make sure discrimination is tackled and there is equal opportunity for all pupils to flourish.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding for schools is used effectively. For example, leaders employ a specialist PE teacher to deliver lessons and improve teachers' subject knowledge and skills. Pupils' participation in PE has increased, and this has enabled teams to take part in tournaments and competitions with nearby schools.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly ambitious for the school. They are committed and want the best for the pupils. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Through regular checks on leaders' actions, they accurately evaluate where aspects are not as strong as they should be. Consequently, they are supporting the school's ongoing improvement.
- Governors have a good understanding of pupils' achievement. They are skilled at interpreting assessment information received from the headteacher. Governors ask leaders probing questions about the performance of pupils. This means that they challenge leaders to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- Governors are well trained in safeguarding and other aspects of their role. The governing body carries out regular checks of the school's systems, including the checks on staff prior to taking up their role. Governors actively seek extra training when they identify an area they judge to need strengthening.
- Governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The governing body has ensured that governors have a wide range of relevant skills and expertise. Governors understand the school's future development needs and the challenges that face the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, staff and governors ensure that pupils' safety and welfare is at the core of the school. The designated safeguarding leaders diligently carry out their duties. They are quick to follow up concerns and put in place support for pupils when required. They also provide regular training and check that staff understand their responsibilities.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding and care across the school. All staff follow the school's rigorous recording and reporting systems. Leaders work well with other agencies and they take appropriate and timely action to keep vulnerable pupils safe.
- Leaders plan the curriculum carefully so that pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Teachers plan lessons and assemblies which teach pupils how

to keep themselves safe, including when they use the internet. Consequently, pupils feel safe, valued and well cared for.

- Nearly all parents who responded to Parent View, the inspection questionnaire, agreed that their children felt safe and were well looked after. Parents were also overwhelmingly positive about their children's safety and care, and the way that staff go out of their way to support children and families in times of need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have ensured that improvements have resulted in good teaching, learning and assessment across a range of subjects in the school. Previously weak teaching has improved and this has led to pupils making good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. When introducing new learning to pupils in English and mathematics, teachers give clear demonstrations and examples. As a result, pupils acquire new skills confidently and quickly.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are highly developed. Teachers know pupils extremely well. Teachers plan activities that generally meet pupils' needs and excite pupils' imaginations. Excellent relationships also contribute to pupils' very positive attitudes to learning.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Teachers ensure that pupils' knowledge of the sounds that letters make is secure. Pupils understand how sounds change when preceded and followed by different letters. Pupils learn to separate and put sounds together accurately and apply these well in reading and writing activities. Reading comprehension is taught well and pupils have a good understanding of the texts that they read.
- The teaching of writing is effective, and teachers ensure that pupils learn and practise different kinds of writing. Pupils develop and apply an appropriate range of vocabulary and punctuation in their writing as they move through the school. However, some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing are not high enough. This limits the amount of progress they make and the quality of their writing.
- Teachers are quick to address any misconceptions in mathematics through their skilful analysis of pupils' understanding. Pupils are articulate in explaining the processes that they use to solve problems in mathematics. Teachers ensure that pupils reflect very maturely on their learning and any errors they make.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' use of questioning is usually good. They ask questions to a wide range of pupils as they discuss ideas and strategies to be successful in their learning. However, they do not consistently pitch the level of difficulty to suit the different abilities of pupils. This means that there are occasions when some pupils are not challenged to think deeply enough about what they know and understand.
- Teachers typically use their assessments of pupils' current attainment well to inform pupils' next steps. Occasionally, teachers do not take sufficient account of this information and, consequently, do not plan work precisely enough to challenge pupils. When this happens, work is too hard for some pupils but too easy for the most able, thus slowing the pace of learning. Leaders are aware of this and they have started to

ensure that staff improve their planning to meet the needs of all pupils consistently.

- There is a close partnership between the teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that the needs of pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, are met. Plans to support and develop their pupils' skills are clearly matched to their needs, and are carefully monitored by leaders. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and are deployed effectively to support pupils with their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong. Staff and pupils show a genuine warmth and significant level of mutual respect for each other. Pupils say that they know adults care about them and will listen to them.
- Pupils talk with maturity and pride about their school. They appreciate the range of enrichment opportunities and how these improve their learning. During a discussion with an inspector, comments included, 'Our trip to Copnor was brilliant and we really had to work together.'
- This is a highly nurturing and inclusive school where pupils are warmly welcomed, valued and supported. The pastoral care provided to pupils is exceptional because pupils' characters, needs and circumstances are known in real depth. One parent, echoing the views of many, said that the school 'is a wonderful local school that creates a nurturing and caring environment for my children to thrive in'.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of the main world religions and celebrate the diversity of cultures and faiths throughout the school year. For example, pupils went to a local college where they had the opportunity to meet and talk to the leaders of different faiths.
- Pupils feel very safe in school because, 'We can always go to a teacher.' They appreciate the chances they receive to take responsibility, such as on the school council, where they make decisions about, for instance, which charity they will support through fundraising.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of different types of bullying and know about the impact that it can have on people. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and if they have any concerns, these are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' are extremely well mannered and respectful to staff and to one another. Their considerate attitudes are a key feature of the positive ethos that permeates through different times of the school day.
- Pupils' behaviour inside the classroom is good. The start of the day is calm and orderly; pupils are punctual and well prepared for learning. Most pupils focus well on their

learning and try hard to succeed.

- Outside of lessons, pupils play happily together, and behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes is sensible, safe and positive.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good; therefore, low-level disruption in classes is rare. Pupils help one another sensitively in lessons. This is because of the strong relationships and the way teachers enable pupils to know when others may need help.
- Almost all parents and carers who took part in the online survey, Parent View, believe that the school ensures that pupils are well-behaved, and staff and pupils agree.
- Attendance is a little above the national average. Pupils are eager to come to school and quick to get into lessons because learning is enjoyable. School staff work well with pupils, families and outside agencies to improve attendance. These successful strategies have improved the attendance of those pupils who previously had higher absence rates.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' work in their books, along with the assessment information and statutory test information, demonstrate that pupils make good progress across all year groups. This means that attainment is rising quickly. Consequently, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- The executive headteacher meets teachers regularly to check that pupils are making rapid progress. Together, staff are working effectively to diminish any minor differences between the rates of progress of different groups of pupils.
- The proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected standard by the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with the national average for English and mathematics.
- Attainment overall in the school, at the end of key stage 2, has not previously been assessed in national tests and assessments. Current pupils attain in line with national expectations. Attainment in reading and mathematics is higher than in writing. Teachers do not sufficiently challenge pupils to use and apply their writing skills accurately enough in a range of contexts. This limits pupils' attainment in writing.
- Leaders' focus on the outcomes of the very small proportion of disadvantaged pupils has ensured that these pupils are making good progress. They are catching up with other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' workbooks show that there is no discernible difference in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their individual starting points. This is because work is set at the right level and they are helped to learn in interesting and practical ways. Leaders track the progress of these pupils closely and take additional actions where necessary.
- Pupils make good progress in other subjects, as well as in English and mathematics, acquiring deep knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, in history, pupils in key stage 2 know and can explain the chronology of different events in the past. In science in key stage 1, they show a secure understanding of materials and their properties.

- Pupils read fluently and with a good comprehension of the texts that closely matches their age and ability. They enjoy reading and take in a wide range of genres. When they need to, pupils make effective use of their knowledge of phonics to help them to read less familiar words. They use the resources well to support their learning, for example through the successful use of 'sound mats' to develop children's phonics knowledge quickly and securely.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader is highly capable and has a very clear understanding of the provision's strengths and areas for development. She is constantly seeking ways to develop it further. For example, there have been significant improvements in the 'role play' area. The 'cottage' provides an effective place for children to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- A high proportion of pupils enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding that are typical for their age. By the end of Reception, most pupils achieve the expected standards across the different areas of learning. Due to some very small cohorts, this can fluctuate from year to year.
- Children settle into Reception quickly. They make strong progress from their individual starting points across the range of areas of learning. Children's progress has hastened because of improvements in the quality of teaching and leadership, and the engaging experiences now provided.
- Children's behaviour is very good. They are confident to explore the interesting learning environment for themselves, both in the classroom and outside. There are many opportunities for children to create their own learning ideas and try things out. They persevere with tasks, and show concentration and good levels of cooperation with their peers.
- The teachers and teaching assistant provide children with a good range of exciting opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of learning. Children respond enthusiastically, and are keen to talk to each other and to adults about what they are learning. For example, the teaching assistant expertly challenged the children in the outside area when in the 'maths shop' ordering numbers. She tested the children's understanding of place value exceptionally well as a 'customer'.
- Teachers and the teaching assistant check children's learning regularly to help plan their next steps. The assessment system ensures that teachers use the information that they gather about children's learning in all areas of the curriculum effectively. As a result, activities usually match children's needs and capture their imaginations.
- Children are safe and all staff receive relevant training to help them understand the importance of meeting the welfare and safeguarding requirements. Children say that they feel safe, and parents confirm that their children are safe and looked after well.
- There are no disadvantaged children currently in the early years. Previously, leaders have identified the key barriers to disadvantaged children's learning and have used the additional funding well. The teachers and teaching assistant ensure that disadvantaged children make good progress by balancing challenge and support effectively. Learning

is further supported by resources that help the children to make good progress.

- Parents value the quality of teaching and care which their children receive. They clearly view it as a strength of the school. Parents understand and appreciate how the provision has been improved by the leader. One parent said, 'We have seen real improvements'.

School details

Unique reference number	125970
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10040920

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Jackson
Headteacher	Jon Gilbert
Telephone number	01798 831 612
Website	www.amberley.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@amberley.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- This academic year is the first time the school has had pupils in Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The small numbers of pupils mean there are mixed-age classes in three of the four classes. Pupils are taught in classes combining Reception and Year 1, Years 2 and 3, and Years 4 and 5. Year 6 pupils are taught in a separate class.

- The executive headteacher is also headteacher of another local primary school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes, carrying out some joint observations with the executive headteacher. The inspector also looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils. He also talked with others informally around the school. Discussions were held with staff, including middle leaders. A meeting was held with six members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and the Diocese of Chichester.
- The inspector took account of the 25 responses to the online survey, Parent View. The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information about the school's performance, and a selection of policies, including those relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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