

Amesbury Archer Primary School

Shears Drive, Archers Gate, Amesbury, Wiltshire SP4 7XX

Inspection dates

12–13 September 2018

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not dealt successfully with the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The school’s curriculum is not leading to a good standard of education.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are not making the progress they should, particularly in key stage 2.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress. Too few reach the higher standards by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Teachers are not using assessment information precisely enough to plan work that matches the needs of pupils.
- Less-able readers do not receive the support they need to catch up quickly enough.
- Middle leaders and subject leaders are not sufficiently precise or detailed when checking the quality of teaching. This means weaknesses are not identified or tackled quickly enough.
- Staff training has not been sufficiently rigorous in supporting teachers’ subject knowledge, particularly in aspects of mathematics and science.
- The governing body is not rigorous in holding leaders to account for the quality of education. The lack of challenge has slowed the rate of improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has a clear understanding of the improvements that need to be made and has quickly gained the confidence of those around her.
- Strong pastoral care supports pupils’ emotional and social development well. Parents and carers value this work. Pupils achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Pupils’ attendance has improved considerably and is now broadly in line with the national average.
- Children have a good start in the early years and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils behave well. Their attitudes towards their learning are leading to improvements in their progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact of leaders, including governors, by ensuring that:
 - the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used effectively and results in good progress for these pupils
 - governors provide sufficient challenge to leaders to bring about more rapid and sustained improvements
 - senior leaders provide middle leaders with sufficient guidance and support so they are able to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their areas of responsibility
 - all leaders provide staff with the training they need to develop their subject knowledge so that pupils of all ages and abilities make the progress they should.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in key stages 1 and 2 so that it is at least consistently good or better and raises pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information to set work that supports and challenges all groups of pupils, including mobile pupils and, in particular, the most able pupils
 - providing targeted support that helps disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities to catch up with others
 - identifying the small steps that less-able readers need to take to be able to overcome the barriers in learning to read.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' actions to tackle the areas of improvement from the previous inspection have not brought about swift enough improvement. Staffing changes have hindered the pace of improvement. Staffing is now settled, and new leaders are taking determined steps so that the school is once again moving in the right direction.
- Where leadership and teaching have been stable over time, such as in the early years, good progress is entrenched. Key stage 2 has suffered from turbulence in staffing and this has had a negative impact on pupils' progress.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders had brought about improvements through introducing thorough systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Pupils' attainment and progress gathered pace. However, too little has been done to review what needs to happen next. Consequently, progress has stalled once again.
- The school has grown over the last few years and a constant influx of pupils (mobile pupils) has provided leaders with significant challenge. Leaders' actions have led to improvements in pupils' care and nurture so that more pupils settle quickly into school routines. However, too little is done to ensure that the academic progress of mobile pupils does not falter.
- Leaders do not use assessment information well enough. They have chosen to collect assessment information in the form of data but they do not analyse this well enough for it to help them to improve pupils' attainment and progress.
- Leaders' impact on improving the consistency in teaching across the school is limited. Leaders have neglected to ensure that staff's subject knowledge is strong enough. As a result, some teachers are less adept at supporting the less able pupils to catch up and do not ensure that the most able pupils thrive.
- Changes in leadership responsibilities and new staffing arrangements mean that leadership skills have not been sufficiently developed. Subject leaders and middle leaders have focused on ensuring that teachers are compliant with school policies. Their work is not yet sufficiently well focused on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards in the subjects that they are responsible for.
- Leaders have been effective in meeting the needs of some of the most vulnerable pupils who have social and emotional needs. Leaders have established an internal support centre, 'The Link', to provide additional support for vulnerable pupils. This is beginning to improve pupils' readiness for learning. The number of exclusions has reduced. Pupils' learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Leaders' expenditure of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is not bringing about sufficient progress.
- Leaders' actions to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have only been partly successful. Investment in family support and pastoral care has led to a rapid rise in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. The implementation of additional support for these pupils has begun to make a difference. However, inconsistencies in the quality of support and the quality of teaching in meeting pupils' needs still exist. Too few

disadvantaged pupils achieve well.

- Similarly, the funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities does not bring about the desired progress for these pupils. Leaders have identified the issues behind pupils' slow progress and have begun, this term, to implement a new approach to meeting pupils' needs. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work.
- Leaders are keen to provide pupils with a curriculum that interests them and broadens their experiences. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning in a range of subjects beyond English and mathematics. However, the school's curriculum is not yet having sufficient impact on raising standards throughout the school. Leaders have not given enough consideration to the components of the school's curriculum.
- The wider curriculum provides effective opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about different faiths and values such as tolerance and respect. They live out the school's values in their daily lives and older pupils confidently debate current national issues.
- The expenditure of sport premium funding is making a difference. More pupils are actively engaged in sporting activities. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a good understanding of the place of exercise and sport in having a healthy lifestyle.
- The new headteacher has quickly gained the confidence and trust of all at the school. She acts with integrity. Her plans are precisely linked to school priorities. She has quickly shaped a leadership team that demonstrates high aspirations to build upon the effective aspects of previous leaders' work.

Governance of the school

- Governance has been largely stable since the previous inspection. However, there is a different chair of governors from the time of the previous full inspection. The vice-chair resigned at the end of the summer term. Two new governors are due to be appointed this month.
- Governors have sought to hold leaders to account by asking questions about the information leaders provide. In some instances, though, governors have been too accepting of the information they receive and have not followed up their questions with sufficient rigour.
- Aspects of attendance, behaviour, systems and structures of assessment have improved as a result of governors' challenge. Governors have responded to the suggestions made in a pupil premium review. They make checks to ensure that additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is used effectively to support the progress and well-being of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors' challenge and allocation of resources have led to rapid improvements in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. However, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is too slow. Governors have not challenged leaders with significant rigour to bring about the necessary improvements.
- Governors ensure that their statutory duties are carried out in the oversight of staff performance, safeguarding and recruitment. They seek and follow independent advice. However, the quality of the advice has failed to bring about the change needed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have been trained well. They are vigilant in reporting concerns and follow the school's procedures diligently. Senior leaders maintain accurate records of any concerns that are raised about pupils' well-being. Where referrals for additional support have not been forthcoming, leaders are tenacious in making sure that families receive the support they need.
- The school works effectively with many external agencies and parents to protect the most vulnerable pupils.
- Documentation is comprehensive. Checks on the suitability of staff, governors and regular volunteers are thorough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Despite improvements since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching varies too much between year groups and between classes. In some cases, unexpected changes in staffing at times other than the start of the year have stalled the journey of improvement.
- While teaching staff are compliant in following assessment systems established since the previous inspection, the work they set does not consistently challenge pupils well enough for pupils to make good progress. This is most noticeable for the most able pupils.
- Staff know who the disadvantaged pupils are and understand the barriers to learning faced by these pupils. Efforts to promote their progress are beginning to bear fruit for some individual pupils. However, the success of the support for disadvantaged pupils is variable and is not enough, particularly in key stage 2, to compensate for the weaknesses in teaching over time.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching have led to quicker identification of pupils' SEN than in previous years. However, the lack of precise information about the small steps pupils need to know and do hinders their progress. In particular, too few pupils receiving support for reading make the progress they need to catch up quickly.
- Teachers are using a new approach to teaching mathematics which encourages pupils to apply their calculation skills to reasoning and solving problems. The effectiveness of this approach is variable across the school, depending on teachers' subject knowledge. Although the approach is supporting pupils identified as average in ability, the challenge for the most able and support for the least able require improvement. Consequently, gaps in pupils' understanding and attainment remain.
- Teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. They have benefited from recent training.
- Teaching is improving in the school. Pupils, parents and local authority representatives recognise this.
- Nine in every 10 parents responding to Parent View said that their children receive appropriate homework for their age. A slightly higher proportion than the national

average say their children are taught well.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. Consequently, pupils' generally positive attitudes contribute to uninterrupted learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils live out the school's values and told inspectors that teachers model these values well. In particular, 'Respect' is a key feature of this school. Pupils have an exceptionally good understanding of fundamental British values. They speak knowledgeably about different faiths and cultures. They demonstrate an appreciation of 'difference' and have a firm understanding of 'right' and 'wrong'.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. They say that it is uncommon. Pupils are confident that, on the rare occasions it occurs, teachers deal with it well. However, a small proportion of parents who responded to Parent View expressed concerns that bullying had not been dealt with well.
- Pupils told inspectors that lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. They attribute improvements in behaviour to the establishment of a breakout room, 'Peake's Space'.
- Pupils feel safe and told inspectors that they are well looked after at school. Staff provide a positive and safe environment. Nurturing relationships are a strong feature of this happy school.
- The personal, social and health education is the bedrock of the school. As a result, pupils confidently describe how to keep themselves safe. In addition, they can describe how to stay healthy.
- Pupils have access to a variety of clubs after school. Currently, approximately only one half of the pupils attend these activities. The 'daily mile' is well established in school. Pupils and staff are positive about the benefits this has on fitness and well-being.
- Clubs such as 'The Forces Club' are well attended and provide pupils with valuable opportunities to celebrate their uniqueness. In addition, the club and additional pastoral support provide pupils with social and emotional support prior to parents' deployment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a calm and orderly place. Teachers establish effective routines so that pupils know and understand what is expected of them. As a result, pupils behave well in class and most take pride in their work. However, occasionally, where work is not sufficiently matched to pupils' learning needs, a minority of pupils become restless and opt out of learning.
- All staff use the school's behaviour policy consistently. Consequently, pupils are

confident that, where poor behaviour occurs, it is dealt with effectively. Most parents who responded to the Parent View survey believe that pupils are well behaved.

- The school takes several pupils at times other than the start of the year. A significant proportion of these pupils have been to a number of schools and have high needs. In the past, their behaviour has warranted an exclusion in line with the school's behaviour policy. Leaders now endeavour to find out about these pupils' needs before they join the school so that they respond quickly to support their needs. Consequently, exclusions over time are reducing.
- The school's Link provision for those pupils who particularly struggle with emotions is proving to be very successful in supporting pupils' social and emotional development. In addition, this 'short-stay' facility has a high success rate in preparing pupils well to reintegrate into mainstream lessons.
- Pupils' conduct is good at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They make good use of the spacious and well-maintained outdoor areas. Pupils of different ages and gender play well together.
- The overall attendance of pupils is much improved and is now in line with the national average. Historically, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has been even lower than for other pupils. However, the attendance of this group of pupils has risen more rapidly than for other pupils in the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The school has improved pupils' attainment and progress since the last inspection but they are not securely good. Previous weak achievement in some subjects has not been entirely eradicated for the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils.
- The progress of the most able pupils remains weak in key stage 2. Even when considering the short length of time that a few pupils have been in school, too few key stage 2 pupils make good progress to reach the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Despite improvements over the last academic year, too few disadvantaged pupils are making the progress they need to catch up with others nationally. With the exception of the few disadvantaged pupils in the early years in 2018, disadvantaged pupils across all year groups do not reach the same standards as others nationally. Their progress is too slow.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not yet make consistently good progress. Support in key stage 1 has brought about greater success than in key stage 2. However, the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is hindered because of the variability in the quality of teaching. Academic targets do not always focus sharply enough on pupils' needs to support them in overcoming the barriers to their learning.
- The attainment of pupils in science has been below the national average for the last few years at the end of both key stages 1 and 2. While pupils develop their scientific knowledge, their experience and understanding of raising questions and testing their hypotheses are limited.

- Pupils achieve well in phonics. With the exception of a one-year dip in 2017, the proportion of pupils who meet the standard in the phonics screening check has been above the national average. In addition, most pupils who do not meet the expected standard in Year 1 catch up in Year 2.
- Despite strong standards in phonics, pupils' reading attainment, although improving, is below average. Pupils' understanding of what they are reading and their higher order skills, such as deduction and reasoning, have yet to be developed fully.
- More pupils are reaching the expected standards at the end of Year 2 to be in line with standards nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2018, more of the most able pupils made good progress to achieve the higher standards.
- Pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling at key stage 2 continue to improve. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the 2017 tests was above the national average. Work in books reflects that pupils apply their knowledge and skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling consistently well.
- Pupils achieve well in physical education and make good progress in their levels of stamina, fitness and physical skills.
- Currently, more pupils of average ability are working at the expected standards for their age than in previous years.
- In both key stages 1 and 2, in all year groups, in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils who have a parent in the armed forces achieve at least as well as, and often better than, other pupils to reach the expected standards for their age.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is well led and managed. The school's strong focus on transition – liaising with pre-schools and families – helps children to settle quickly into school life. Inspectors observed children who were happy and settled in their first few days at school.
- Clear routines and teachers' high expectations result in children behaving extremely well. There is an abundance of inviting learning resources which teachers deploy effectively to stimulate children's curiosity and capture their attention.
- Adults' interactions with children are precise and timely. Teachers make good use of their assessments to make sure that children develop their skills, knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning.
- Teaching in the early years engenders a love of reading. In particular, teachers ensure that no child is disadvantaged in reading by their home circumstances. This, together with highly effective teaching in phonics, is helping children to get off to a good start in both reading and writing.
- The proportion of children reaching the expected standard – a good level of development – has been higher than the national average for the last few years. This is because children make good progress. However, few children make rapid progress. In the past, few children have exceeded expectations set out in the early learning goals. However, in 2018, there was a rise in the proportion of children who made good

progress to exceed expectations in reading, writing and number.

- Historically, too few of the disadvantaged children have been ready for Year 1. In 2018, leaders made sure that the pupil premium funding was used effectively. As a result, most disadvantaged children made good progress. These pupils have joined Year 1 with the skills and knowledge they need.
- Teachers make regular and accurate assessments to ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have the right learning experiences to support their development. Consequently, these children flourish.
- Teaching staff are thorough in their approach to safeguarding children. In common with the rest of the school, adults are vigilant to the needs of the children. Where children have complex medical needs, the leader is uncompromising in her drive to ensure that all staff are well trained.
- Staff work sensitively with parents. Parents appreciate how teachers involve them in their child's learning and development.

School details

Unique reference number	133775
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10042665

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	400
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Haugh
Headteacher	Helen Donnelly
Telephone number	01980 625 944
Website	www.amesburyarcher.wilts.sch.uk
Email address	admin@amesburyarcher.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	January 2016

Information about this school

- Amesbury Archer Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. The current headteacher took up post in September 2018.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is rising but remains below the national average.
- Approximately one third of the pupils in the school have a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part way through their primary school education is high compared to other schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all year groups. Some visits were accompanied by senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body. She also met with a representative of the local authority and undertook a telephone conversation with another representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team, middle leaders and subject leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including improvement plans, information about pupils' progress and attainment and records relating to attendance, safety and welfare.
- Inspectors met informally with pupils and viewed the 141 responses to the pupil questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with pupils on the playground, at lunchtime and in lessons. A group of pupils joined an inspector for a learning walk around the school. Another inspector heard a group of pupils read.
- Inspectors met with a group of teachers and looked at the 34 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors talked to parents at the beginning of both days and read the 151 responses to Parent View, as well as the free-text responses. An inspector also met with one parent during the school day.

Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gareth Simons	Ofsted Inspector
David New	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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