

Ashurst CofE Primary School

School Lane, Ashurst, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3AY

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and other leaders have developed a school with a very strong sense of community. The school values are known and respected highly by staff, pupils and parents.
- Leaders provide a good education for all pupils. Pupils' writing skills are well developed. Teaching is personalised well to pupils' individual learning needs. Consequently, pupils make strong progress across the curriculum.
- Pupils learn about a wide range of interesting topics. Strong links with an international school develop pupils' understanding of the wider world well.
- Personal development, welfare and behaviour provision is outstanding. Every pupil is very well cared for. Pupils are very happy in school.
- Children in the early years are well prepared for the next stages of their education. Being taught with older pupils helps them become confident and resilient learners.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They deeply value the education their children receive.
- Extra funding to develop pupils' physical education and participation in sports is well spent. Most pupils regularly take part in a well-considered range of sporting activities.
- Governors work very closely with school leaders. They know the school very well. They are well placed to support leaders to improve the school further.
- Following a recent dip in standards, leaders have improved mathematics teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, pupils' outcomes are improving in mathematics.
- Phonics outcomes are not yet consistently strong. Leaders' work to develop this area of provision is improving pupils' phonics skills.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop teaching, learning and assessment so that outcomes in mathematics continue to improve.
- Ensure that all pupils, in key stage 1, have the necessary phonic skills and understanding to support them as they move on to the next stage of their education.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is passionate that every pupil learns the skills and knowledge they need to reach their potential. Together with other leaders, she has developed a welcoming school community where pupils are very happy and enjoy school.
- Leaders know every pupil incredibly well in this close-knit, small school. As a result, pupils often receive highly personalised learning programmes. They make strong progress across the curriculum.
- Leaders work together effectively to share their specific knowledge and expertise well. They acted promptly to address concerns with mathematics outcomes. Pupils are now making better progress in mathematics.
- Pupils have many opportunities to learn about a wide range of different cultures. The school's link with a primary school in Gambia helps to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education well. They are well prepared for life in the modern world.
- The school's values of 'hope, love and joy' underpin the school day. Thoughtful assemblies start the day. Pupils share their academic success and other proud moments with their peers in these caring, respectful whole-school gatherings.
- Leaders' work to help pupils understand the risks of using technology inappropriately is effective. Pupils enjoy learning to programme computers. They understand leaders' clear rules and expectations for using the internet.
- Pupils learn about British values well. They take part in debates about democracy. They learn about different religions and beliefs. Leaders share well-considered biographies of people from different cultures with pupils, as part of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils have a good understanding of life in Britain today.
- Leaders work well within limited space to ensure a strong physical education provision for pupils. Useful links with other schools and the use of other outside spaces means that pupils often participate in a variety of sports, such as gymnastics. Pupils enjoy the wide range of after-school activities. Chess club and football are very popular.
- Parents are regularly updated about their children's progress. All parents spoken to by the inspector commented on attending useful parent information afternoons with leaders. Parents visit the school for rewards assemblies and are invited to watch pupil learning activities. As a result, parents are hugely supportive of the education provided for pupils by leaders and staff.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders identify the specific needs of pupils accurately. Individual support for pupils matches their needs appropriately. Most pupils with SEND are catching up quickly with others with similar starting points.

Governance of the school

- Governors are well trained and knowledgeable. They fulfil their legal responsibilities

thoroughly. Governors visit the school regularly to ensure that safeguarding procedures remain effective.

- Governors have high expectations and aspirations for all pupils to succeed. They hold the leaders to account through regular meetings. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are well placed to support leaders to continue improving the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies are reviewed regularly and kept up to date with any legal changes. Staff are well trained and know how and when to report any concerns they have. These are acted upon quickly by leaders, if they occur.
- Work with other agencies to keep children safe is effective. Leaders ensure that appropriate actions are in place to support vulnerable children and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils learn in mixed year group classes. Teaching activities are well planned to match the needs of all pupils. For example, in English, pupils in Year 3 were learning to identify verbs when Year 4 were learning about adverbs and adjectives. In mathematics, Year 4 pupils were learning short division and Year 5 long division. Pupils are challenged to learn more and develop their subject skills and knowledge well.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding. They adapt their questioning well to help pupils work out the answer. Whilst studying the poem 'Leisure' by William Henry Davies and analysing a text from the story 'Stig of the dump' by Clive King, pupils were challenged to explain the meaning of the language used in the poem and text.
- Teachers keep accurate records of the skills and knowledge pupils have developed. They use this information well to plan activities that help pupils build on their prior learning. As a result, pupils make strong progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils are focused on their learning because well-known routines are consistently applied. Positive relationships between pupils and with teachers are the norm. Classrooms are calm and focused learning environments.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They coordinate well with each other so pupils to move smoothly from one activity to another. As a result, pupils' learning times with adults are maximised.
- Pupils enjoy learning about a wide range of interesting topics. They improve their writing when learning about, for example, the Hindu valley in India. They write confidently about the culture and religions of the people living in this region and of the geography of this part of the world. Pupils have good writing skills.
- Teachers' use of subject-specific language helps develop pupils' technical language well. For example, Year 3 pupils successfully tackled questions to apply their

understanding of 'inverse' in mathematics.

- Pupils with SEND are making good progress. Regular individual or small-group work helps pupils engage fully with their learning. Work is well planned to challenge pupils at the right degree of difficulty.
- Teaching of reading is effective. Pupils enjoy reading. Some pupils apply their phonics skills well. This helps them to develop their confidence in reading and understand the meaning of texts. However, this is not consistent for all learners.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are very proud of the school and say they feel very safe. Some pupils told the inspector there is no bullying, others said it is very rare. All said if it did happen it would be dealt with quickly by adults.
- Pupils exemplify the school values of 'love, hope and joy'. They are caring of each other and confident. Pupils spoke eloquently about their learning and how they enjoy school. Parents echoed pupils' views. One parent, speaking for many, said their child 'couldn't wait to come to school every day'.
- Pupils attend a wide range of after-school clubs and trips. They spoke very positively of outings such as Year 5's visit to Swanage and Year 4's visit to Arundel Castle. Chess club with the headteacher at lunchtime is very popular, as is football club for both boys and girls.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and when using other forms of technology. They told the inspector how they follow the school rules to stay safe while using the internet.
- Whole-school assemblies are times to celebrate pupils' academic and other successes, as well as learn important messages. Pupils are very attentive during these assemblies. They listen intently to the messages given and engage excitedly with discussions around themes such as grit and determination.
- Pupils learn how to be good citizens in modern Britain. They take part in events organised, for example, by the police to learn about citizenship. Pupils are taught to accept peoples' differences. They are very respectful of each other.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding in classrooms and around the school. They are courteous and polite to each other, staff and visitors. Classrooms are vibrant places to learn in, with happy children engaged fully in their learning.
- There are no exclusions.
- Pupils' attendance is above average. No pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. Leaders monitor attendance regularly. Communication with home rapidly addresses any rare concerns about pupils' attendance.

- The school site is looked after well by pupils. There is no litter or graffiti around the school buildings or playground. Pupils use their limited play space very well and behave responsibly during breaktimes.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. In recent years, an average proportion of pupils achieved expected standards by the end of key stage 2. More pupils are now achieving these and better standards.
- Pupils achieve well across the wider curriculum. Science outcomes are good. Pupils' outcomes in humanities are improving.
- Overall, pupils achieve strong writing outcomes. They produce extended pieces of writing that show their creativity and good use of a wide range of vocabulary.
- Both English and mathematics outcomes are improving for current pupils in Years 1 and 2. More pupils are achieving at the higher standard than in previous years.
- Most-able pupils achieve strong outcomes across a wide range of subjects.
- Leaders' work with secondary schools and nurseries is helping to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their education. Leaders communicate with the linked nursery providers often, ensuring that children are well supported as they move into the early years. Pupils visit secondary schools as part of the well-planned transition process to secondary school.
- Most pupils with SEND are making good progress because individual classroom support is well tailored to meet their needs.
- Extra support in mathematics, for those pupils who need it, is effective. Pupils work well with staff in individual and small group sessions. As a result, pupils are catching up quickly with other pupils with similar starting points. More work is required to ensure that outcomes in mathematics continue to improve.
- Leaders' work to improve outcomes in phonics is working well. More pupils are improving their phonics skills. However, more pupils still need to secure their phonics understanding before moving on to the next stages of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years provides a good quality of education for children. Teachers know the children and their families very well. Children are very safe. Children mature quickly as they are taught with older pupils. They learn positive behaviours from older pupils who act as good role models.
- Teaching activities in the early years are well tailored to children's needs. For example, teachers helped children in different ways to draw or build their designs for animal puppets as part of their art and technology curriculum.
- Children learn well-established school routines very quickly. They move between activities smoothly with little fuss. They tidy up well with each other and the older Year 1 pupils. Little time is lost to learning. They behave exceptionally well.

- Teaching of phonics in Reception Year is effective. It provides children with the necessary skills to remember their letters and sounds. They develop a wide range of vocabulary quickly, as they often learn words used by the older children in the same classroom.
- Children have regular opportunities to initiate their own learning. Children were observed developing their motor skills and balance successfully during an outdoor session, using self-selected resources. Outdoor space is small, but teachers skilfully adapt the teaching provision within these limitations.
- Early years staff speak to many parents on a daily basis. Parents value this regular contact highly. As a result, staff respond quickly to any concerns highlighted by parents and carers.
- Recent outcomes for children at the end of early years have been varied. Leaders have addressed the inconsistencies quickly. Leaders' work to improve teaching, learning and assessment has increased the proportion of children making good progress.
- Children benefit from the outstanding personal development, welfare and behaviour provision seen across the school. They are fully involved in the school and mix with all other pupils throughout the day. All pupils performed together in the school's recent production of 'Joseph and the amazing technicolour dreamcoat'.

School details

Unique reference number	126020
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10084271

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	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Woods
Headteacher	Janet Williams
Telephone number	01403 710426
Website	https://ashurst.eschools.co.uk/website
Email address	office@ashurstcofe-pri.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2007

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized rural primary school, with a strong Christian ethos. The school was last inspected under section 48 of the education act 2005, in April 2018. The school was graded outstanding.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- Most pupils start school with higher-than-average prior attainment.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes or groups.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited many lessons across all year groups to observe pupils' learning, most with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders and teachers.
- He met with pupils and talked to them during playtime, lunchtime and lessons.
- The inspector gathered the views of parents during both mornings of the inspection.
- The single central record was checked by the inspector alongside other documentation related to the safety of pupils and the safer recruitment of staff.
- The inspector considered information provided by the school, including the self-evaluation and development plans, as well as plans for and evaluations of the use of the sport premium.
- A scrutiny of pupils' work was carried out by the inspector. He looked at pupils' work during visits to lessons and heard a small group of pupils read.
- The inspector considered the school's published performance information and its internal information about pupils' progress and attainment.
- The inspector spoke by telephone to a West Sussex local authority representative and met with a representative of the Diocese of Chichester.
- He met with the governors on three separate occasions and considered governors' minutes and a local authority school improvement report.

Inspection team

Dylan Davies, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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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