

Lancastrian Infant School

Orchard Gardens, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1DG

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

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 focused and effective leadership of the headteacher and new senior leadership team has led to considerable improvements across the school since the previous inspection.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their education. They enjoy learning and conduct themselves very well. They make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- As a result of effective phonics teaching, pupils do increasingly well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Teachers and teaching assistants promote a love of reading and this is reflected in pupils' good outcomes in reading at the end of key stage 1.
- Good teaching is ensuring that improvements are sustainable. Over time most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and the considerable number who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good in English and mathematics but not universally strong across all subjects. The school's curriculum is not fully developed. Until very recently, the curriculum has been focused on English and mathematics, to the detriment of subjects such as history, geography and music.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. As a result, too many pupils produce work with poor handwriting and presentation.
- The most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to make the progress of which they are capable. As a result, few reach greater depth in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils are enthused by the first-hand experiences they encounter, including their opportunities to attend forest school. This contributes to their positive behaviour and attendance.
- Due to a concerted effort by the school, attendance has significantly improved since the previous inspection and is now much more in line with the national average. Fewer pupils are now persistently absent from school.
- The governing body has undergone many changes since the previous inspection. Governors are ambitious for the school. They have been instrumental in working with senior leaders to bring about improvements.
- Safeguarding is effective. Adults keep pupils safe and address child protection concerns in a timely fashion.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of the school's curriculum by ensuring that it is suitably broad and balanced.
- Ensure that staff have consistently high expectations of the presentation, quality and accuracy of pupils' writing.
- Increase the proportion of pupils who reach and exceed expectations at the end of key stage 1, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- This is an improving school, despite a period of recent significant change. Under the guidance of the headteacher and new senior leadership team, the school has gone from strength to strength.
- The staffing team has now stabilised. Staff are now a close and tight-knit team. The staff that were in post at the last inspection are overwhelmingly positive about the significant improvements made by senior leaders.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They gather detailed information about the quality of what teachers provide and pupils' achievement. Using this information, they plan and implement effective strategies to continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Staff, including leaders, access a wide variety of training opportunities to keep their skills fresh and up to date. Leaders have also been supported by the local authority to work within the Solent Teaching School Alliance to develop aspects of leadership across the school. Staff work well with colleagues in local schools to support each other with training and moderation.
- Senior leaders lead on English, mathematics and early years and are particularly enthusiastic and ambitious for achievement within their areas. In this small school, these senior leaders are also the three class teachers, so this enthusiasm for improvement is firmly embedded within practice. Leaders monitor these subjects effectively through looking at pupils' work and by supporting each other with their planning. This means these curriculum areas have a high status and progress is good. However, the focus on these areas, alongside science, has been to the detriment of the wider curriculum.
- Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn British values through the taught curriculum, forest school work and collective worship and demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of different cultures, faiths and beliefs. Another contributor to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is the school's focus on helping all children to develop their ability to work with others in collaboration, as well as to develop their independence. A good example of this work is the display of a large jigsaw made up of pupils' names, entitled 'all different, all equal and we all fit together'.
- The headteacher coordinates the provision for pupils with SEND and leadership of this aspect is good. Pupils receive effective support and have full access to the whole school curriculum. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their different starting points.
- Following an external review, the pupil premium grant is now spent effectively. Leaders know the school's disadvantaged pupils well. Leaders identify any barriers to learning that each disadvantaged pupil might face and put appropriate measures in place to address them. Leaders monitor the effectiveness of these measures to ensure that they are helping individual disadvantaged pupils to make strong progress, at times outperforming their peers.

- Leaders use the primary physical education and sport premium highly effectively. The extra funding has increased the number of pupils participating in extra-curricular sport and has enabled the school to train a forest school leader, as well as providing karate as a life-skills lesson for all pupils.
- Until very recently, leaders had not done enough to ensure that the school's curriculum was suitably broad and balanced. Too little time has been spent on learning about subjects such as history, geography and music. Outcomes in these subjects have not been given the same attention and importance as English and mathematics. As a result, there is little evidence of pupils making strong progress in these subjects. Leaders are working to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is developed and embedded across the school so that pupils make better progress.
- Parents and carers are highly supportive of the work of the school. Parents sought out the inspector to praise the work of leaders and staff. Almost all parents who responded to the online survey were positive about all aspects of the school. One comment, representative of many, stated: 'I do not believe that [my daughter] could feel any more valued or cared for. The staff work incredibly hard to ensure pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. I highly recommend this school.'
- The local authority has supported the school since the previous inspection. Officers report that leaders have responded well to this support and have made significant improvements.

Governance of the school

- Governors are fully committed to school improvement and, following a review of governance, are increasingly knowledgeable and diligent in their work. They have made difficult strategic decisions that have led to substantial improvements at the school, including the recent leadership restructuring.
- Governors carefully evaluate the effectiveness of the work of leaders and staff. They visit regularly to get an overview of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors use their evaluations to challenge leaders and hold them firmly to account for the school's performance.
- Governors check the school's use of additional funding. They ensure that extra expenditure is focused on improving pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Careful checks are made on all adults who come into contact with children. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. They understand their responsibilities. All staff are quick to share concerns with those responsible for safeguarding. Any slight concern is quickly and appropriately reported, investigated and kept under review. Records are kept and stored securely. Parents are confident that leaders do everything possible to keep their children safe, happy and healthy.
- Governors are very aware of their role in promoting safeguarding. They make the necessary checks on leaders' work to ensure that children are kept safe.

- Leaders know children and their families very well, and staff are especially vigilant with families that are potentially vulnerable. Leaders are highly proactive in securing the services that children and families may need.
- The school has a notably friendly and open culture. Pupils know that they can speak with any adult, at any time, if they are worried about something, whether at home or at school. Pupils know that adults will listen to them and will help them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have developed assessment systems to track pupils' performance rigorously. These systems identify pupils who are falling behind so that additional support is put in place. Teachers moderate their assessments and share practice with other schools. Assessment systems provide valuable information about what pupils can do in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers make good use of this information to set work that matches pupils' needs with precision.
- There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. This subject is rapidly becoming a strength. Pupils who need to catch up receive effective teaching to help them do so quickly. Teachers make effective use of resources to support pupils' learning and encourage learning at home. The pupils who read to the inspector could work out unfamiliar words by blending sounds together. They enthusiastically explained their preference for certain books and most enjoy reading.
- Efforts to raise standards in writing are having a clear impact. Work in pupils' books shows evidence of increasing challenge in the tasks set by teachers, and in the extent to which pupils are expected to write at length independently. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are not always high enough. Pupils are often unchallenged when they produce work of a poorer standard than they are capable of. This results in poor presentation and handwriting for many pupils. Leaders have identified this, and handwriting has become a recent focus for improvement.
- Learning in mathematics is effective because teachers are providing a consistent approach to teaching. Pupils' workbooks show that problem-solving and reasoning skills are being well developed across the school. Pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers are starting to improve their skills at getting potential high achievers to think more deeply. However, pupils' work shows that, although improving, there are still too few pupils reaching greater depth.
- Teachers do not plan as thoroughly or as well in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Although they teach the full range of national curriculum subjects, some subjects are touched on only briefly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Parents who spoke with the inspector said that leaders access a range of effective

external support to help families with parenting challenges. They also said that leaders are easily available for discussions with parents.

- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe in a range of ways. For example, they know about e-safety and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They were able to explain how they use this information to stay safe online at home.
- Pupils know the school's rules well. They show respect for these rules and follow them carefully. Pupils are quick to respond to the directions and instructions that they are given by staff. This ensures that lessons run smoothly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and well mannered. Almost all parents who responded to the school's parent questionnaire agreed that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved. Inspection evidence confirms this view. Pupils behave well in lessons, at playtime and when moving around the school. Pupils confirmed that pupils behave well, and adults deal effectively with the rare instances of poor behaviour.
- Adult supervision during breaktime creates a pleasant environment that is ordered and safe. Staff ensure that pupils' play is enriching, and they are skilful at helping pupils to organise and take part in games and activities.
- Most pupils attend regularly, and their good attendance is widely celebrated. However, historically there has been an issue with attendance. This was due to a small number of pupils, including some disadvantaged pupils, whose attendance was well below average.
- Leaders have worked strenuously with families to reduce absence. The school provides support in a continuing effort to convince families of the importance of regular attendance and to help them overcome any issues. The school has had some marked successes with individual pupils, making a significant difference to their attendance rates. Overall attendance has successfully been improved and is now almost in line with the national average.
- In cases of persistently poor attendance, particularly when the pupils are disadvantaged, the school has worked hard to provide additional support for learning. This has helped to ensure that the progress of these pupils has not suffered unduly when compared to the other pupils in the school. The forest school work has paid a large part in improving attendance, as pupils are so keen to attend and really value the opportunities that it offers them.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children make a good start in the early years and are well prepared for Year 1. Pupils continue to make strong progress in key stage 1.
- Pupils' achievement improved markedly from 2016 to the present as a result of improved leadership and teaching, learning and assessment. In 2016, the proportions of Year 2 pupils reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics were significantly below the national averages. In 2018, the proportions dramatically

improved. Outcomes at the expected level were above the national average in reading and just below in writing and mathematics. However, outcomes for pupils at a greater depth of understanding remain well below national averages, particularly in writing and mathematics.

- Most pupils enjoy reading and talk about books enthusiastically. They read fluently and well, appropriately for their age. Most pupils read with an adult regularly. Pupils use their phonics skills well to help them to read unfamiliar words. They read confidently and show good understanding of the texts that they read.
- The number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has significantly improved over recent years and was much closer to the national average in 2018. Numbers who meet the expected standard at the end of Year 2 have also improved over recent years to be closer to the national average in 2018.
- As the school has space for pupils, many enter at different times during the year. For instance, this year 11 pupils have entered Year 1. Six of these pupils speak English as an additional language and several have no previous school experience. This has a significant impact on the progress data for the Year 1 cohort. While these new pupils are making strong progress from their very low starting points, they are unlikely to pass the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.
- Leaders' analysis of pupils' assessments and the inspector's scrutiny of pupils' books show that current pupils, across the school and from all groups, are making consistently strong progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Where pupils have been taught about subjects other than English, mathematics and science in enough depth, they make similarly good progress in these subjects. For example, pupils talk passionately about art and the school displays a good range of their work. However, pupils do not make strong progress, overall, in a range of subjects other than English, mathematics and science, because they are not given enough opportunities to do so.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years provision is very strong.
- Adults know and support the children very well. They effectively assess children's individual needs and plan learning activities that are well matched to the academic, social and emotional needs of the children, with a focus of 'planning in the moment'. As a result, children make good progress, often from very low starting points, and make the transition to Year 1 easily. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception has been steadily improving over recent years, and in 2018 it was almost in line with the national average.
- Leaders have created an exciting curriculum that promotes good development in all areas of learning, including reading, writing and mathematics. A range of activities, both in the classroom and outdoors, enable the children to enjoy their learning. The outside area is a highlight of the provision, with activities waiting to entice children to use their curiosity to learn. High-quality resources are organised so that children learn to be independent. During the inspection children were seen enthusiastically car-washing various toy vehicles, finding ways to move water along pipes, running a

restaurant and composing music. Children thrive and are growing in confidence and self-esteem.

- Work in children's books shows that they are making good progress. For any children that fall behind in their learning, leaders provide effective support so that they catch up quickly. Children with SEND and who speak English as an additional language are well supported by adults to ensure that they make good progress. Support for children who struggle with the development of speech and language is effective and helps children to overcome the barriers they face. Specific teaching to develop cursive handwriting skills within the provision is being introduced to give children a strong start in their readiness for writing.
- Children in the early years learn very quickly adults' high expectations of their conduct. They listen attentively when others are speaking and sustain concentration over long periods of time. They share and take turns very well and demonstrate the school values for cooperative working when learning and playing.
- Leaders have established strong partnerships with parents to ensure that the children make the best start to their education. They involve parents in their children's learning in a variety of ways and all parents attend class assemblies and consultation sessions.
- Leaders have ensured that the early years statutory requirements for welfare and safety are met. Staff are vigilant and observant, and this helps to keep children safe.

School details

Unique reference number	125822
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10088141

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Brixey
Headteacher	Mrs Zoe Gordon
Telephone number	01243 782818
Website	www.lancastrian.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@lancastrian.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a significant number of staff changes at all levels across the school and on the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes. All sessions were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils and members of the governing body.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector listened to pupils read. The inspector also looked at examples of pupils' work in books and on display.
- A meeting was held with a representative group of pupils and account was taken of the 21 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector took account of a wide range of information, including: the school's website; the development plan; assessment information about pupils' learning, including the school's own information on pupils' starting points and outcomes; and reports on the quality of monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment. The inspector reviewed documentation relating to safeguarding, as well as minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector took account of the school's own questionnaire to parents and the 27 responses and seven free-text responses from parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Due regard was also taken of the 11 responses from staff to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Marcia Goodwin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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