

Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 8EP

Inspection dates

14–15 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	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leaderships by the headteacher has led to improvements. She has balanced high expectations and challenge with support. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and pupils make good progress.
- Governors have an in-depth knowledge of the school. They hold leaders rigorously to account for pupil outcomes and the use of additional funding.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good levels of support enabling them to progress well.
- Leaders have used professional development and training opportunities effectively to further improve the quality of teaching.
- Attendance is good, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders closely monitor all absence, ensuring that high attendance is maintained.
- A strong culture of safeguarding exists throughout the school. The welfare of pupils is a high priority with all staff. As a result, pupils say they feel safe.
- Teachers use questioning effectively, getting pupils to think carefully about their work and learning. Occasionally, pupils tackle things they already know and can do or are required to just wait while others catch up.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and contributes to the good progress that pupils make.
- The early years is extremely well led and managed. Children benefit from outstanding teaching in a stimulating environment. As a result, they make strong progress in all areas of learning.
- The roles of subject leaders are well developed. Leaders monitor frequently the quality of teaching and work in pupils' books.
- Pupils are generally well behaved and keen to talk to visitors. However, at times they become distracted and disengaged from their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers use knowledge of what pupils can do to plan precisely the next learning steps they need to take, particularly in mathematics.
- Ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations of behaviour for all pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have worked tirelessly since the previous inspection to improve outcomes. They have had clear, ambitious plans for improvement, which are continually evaluated and monitored. Consequently, previous weaknesses have been identified and remedied. Pupils are making good progress across the school as a result.
- Leaders and governors know their school extremely well. They have an accurate understanding of the areas of strength and those that require further attention.
- All leaders spoken to were able to account for the support they have been given to ensure that they monitor their subjects effectively. They were able to talk about the actions they have undertaken and the impact those actions have had on pupils' progress.
- All staff spoken to feel that there has been significant improvement since the last inspection. They value the continuing professional development that is helping them to further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders monitor teaching to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Inspection activities, including work scrutiny, confirm this.
- The inclusion leader knows the pupils well and ensures that additional funding has an impact. Consequently, pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged pupils, make good progress from their various starting points.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. Pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain by promoting their understanding of equalities and respect for other faiths and cultures. Pupils were able to talk articulately about the importance of tolerance.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used extremely well. A focus on swimming has resulted in most pupils being able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 3. Pupils' participation in competitive sports events has risen considerably across the school.
- Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said they would recommend the school to others, but a significant number of parents raised concerns when talking to inspectors. Leaders and governors are aware of parents' concerns and acknowledge they need to continue to address the issues raised.

Governance of the school

- Governors are dedicated, determined and highly ambitious for the school. Their very focused approach ensures that they identify the school's strengths and improvement priorities exceptionally well. They question leaders carefully about the effect of actions taken to improve teaching and pupil outcomes. Alongside this, governors regularly visit the school to monitor the impact of actions taken by leaders.
- Governors have ensured that the funding for pupils with SEND, and for disadvantaged pupils, is targeted to meet the needs of individual pupils. As a result, pupils make good

progress from their starting points.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are tenacious in keeping pupils safe. There is a strong and embedded culture of safeguarding in which pupils feel safe and valued. All staff are trained and there are weekly briefings to ensure that staff remain vigilant. As a result, staff have a good awareness of the statutory guidance for keeping pupils safe. Pupils told inspectors that they could go to any adult with a concern.
- Safer recruitment processes are secure, ensuring that only suitable people are recruited to work with pupils. The nominated governor for safeguarding attends all interviews and has undergone safer recruitment training.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They spoke knowledgeably of the importance of internet safety and of keeping themselves safe when not in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good across the school. Strong teaching, learning and assessment is securing good progress for all groups of pupils across the curriculum.
- The teaching of writing is very effective. Pupils' books show that the teaching of writing is systematic. Leaders recognised the need to improve the teaching of grammar to enable pupils to write well-constructed sentences. Pupils are given opportunities to write independently, using and applying the techniques and strategies that they have been taught. As a result, pupils make strong progress.
- The teaching of phonics is good; it is well organised and effective. Pupils were observed listening intently to their teachers and were able to use the correct sounds to support their reading and writing.
- Teachers encourage pupils to read often and widely. Interesting texts ensure that a culture of reading is fostered and nurtured. Leaders ensure that pupils experience quality texts, and as a result pupils make good progress in reading.
- In mathematics, pupils' books showed strong evidence of progress for all groups. Leaders have chosen to use the 'habits of mind' learning behaviours. Teachers use this consistently to embed learning and to challenge pupils. Leaders also promote the 'thinking deeply' question, which enables pupils to verbalise their understanding.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use their assessment of what pupils know and can do to pitch work at the right level. However, teachers do not always consider pupils' different starting points, particularly in mathematics. This can lead to a lack of challenge and/or support for pupils' varying needs and abilities.
- Teachers provide effective support for pupils with SEND. Interventions and support are well thought out. Consequently, pupils make good progress against their individual targets. The school's inclusion leader ably supports teachers to ensure that targets are succinct, regularly monitoring pupils' progress to ensure that they remain on track.

- Subjects across the curriculum, including science, are taught well. The teaching of skills and knowledge is carefully planned, helping pupils to develop as scientists, artists or geographers. This was evident when pupils were comparing different localities by describing geographical features. Opportunities for pupils to write and apply their writing and mathematical skills across these subjects are well thought through.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The welfare and personal development of pupils is at the heart of the school. The values of the school 'walking in the footsteps of Jesus with love, trust and forgiveness' underpin the work of the whole school.
- Opportunities for pupils' personal development are spread through the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of British values. They respect the beliefs and culture of others and they visit different places of worship. For example, they visit a mosque when learning about Islam. As one pupil said, 'We may look different, but we are the same inside.'
- Pupils understand what bullying is. They told inspectors that bullying is rare and teachers deal with it well when it occurs.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school because the adults will help them if they need it. They know about road safety, stranger danger and keeping themselves safe online.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning were generally good. However, at times they could become easily distracted in class and lose concentration.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance for all groups of pupils is high.
- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is generally good. Pupils enjoy playtimes and like playing with each other.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. A significant number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey voiced concerns about behaviour and bullying. Some parents felt that their concerns were not being addressed by school leaders. Leaders and governors are determined to work with parents to address these concerns.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection outcomes have improved. Assessment information and work in pupils' books indicate that current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' outcomes at both key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2018 were strong.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and Year 1 is good. The youngest pupils read well with developing fluency, sounding out words using their phonics skills.
- Pupils continue to make strong progress in writing. At the end of key stage 2 in 2018, pupils made progress well above the national average in writing.
- The proportion of pupils that joins or leaves the school at other than the usual times is high. However, despite this the school ensures that good outcomes are maintained
- Pupils with SEND make similar progress to other pupils of the same ability. This is due to plans having specific targets that challenge and support these pupils to make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress over time from their starting points. In writing at the end of key stage 1 in 2018, disadvantaged pupils attained higher than other disadvantaged pupils nationally. Work in pupils' books, and assessment information, indicates that these pupils are supported effectively in class and so do well.
- In mathematics, pupils' books across the school showed strong evidence of progress for all groups. Their attainment is rising as their understanding, problem-solving and reasoning skills improve.
- Inspection evidence, along with the school's own data and assessment information, indicates that good progress is made in a range of subjects. Pupils' topic and science books show that pupils make consistently strong progress across the wider curriculum.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years leader is passionate and knowledgeable about this stage of children's learning. Transition is well thought through and involves effective work with pre-schools, as well as home visits. As a result, children settle quickly, are very happy and are extremely well looked after. They get off to a very strong start and thrive as they move through the Reception Year.
- The early years leader uses assessment information of each child to plan tasks that meet their needs exceptionally well. From their varied starting points, children make substantial and sustained progress over time. Outstanding teaching and well-thought-out provision ensure that most children are ready for Year 1 by the time they leave the Reception Year.
- Children have very strong relationships with adults, and consequently are happy, motivated and ready to learn. The number of children leaving the Reception Year having achieved a good level of development remains high.
- Adults use the indoor and outdoor environments imaginatively, drawing on children's

interests. At the time of the inspection, children were enthralled with the pirate theme. Inspectors observed two boys sitting in the pirate boat sharing books with each other. The early years leader makes sure that there are plenty of opportunities for children to develop their writing and mathematical understanding. The English and mathematics sheds outside were well resourced. Consequently, children are challenged effectively and find tasks and provision stimulating.

- The teaching of phonics is very strong. Children learn the basic skills of reading and apply the sounds they have learned to their spelling. During the inspection, children were writing sentences about what they could see in a bottle, spelling many simple words accurately. One parent commented: 'My daughter is thriving in Reception. I have been genuinely astonished by her rate of development, particularly in phonics.'
- Learning activities are rich in challenge. Activities are well planned to encourage the development of social skills through role play and construction. Children's learning behaviours have given them the confidence to independently take on challenges and complete tasks.
- Children behave well, both in the classroom and the outside area. Children cooperate well with each other and chatter happily while they work and play, for example when sharing ideas of how best to 'cut the jelly'.
- Children's safety is of prime concern. All adults know and understand well their duties and responsibilities in terms of keeping children safe. They receive regular training, including in paediatric first aid. They are vigilant and ensure that welfare requirements are fully met.

School details

Unique reference number	116368
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10088129

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	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Wagner
Headteacher	Julie-Anne Palfrey
Telephone number	01794 512 047
Website	www.romseyabbeyschool.co.uk
Email address	adminoffice@romseyabbey.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 March 2017

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There is one class for each year group.
- Most pupils are White British. Almost all pupils speak English as a first language.
- The proportion of pupils identified with SEND is low.
- There has been a high amount of staff turnover since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school outside the normal times is high.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across the school. Most observations were carried out with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and looked at work in their books. All these activities were carried out alongside the school's senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff, parents and leaders.
- Parents were met informally at the start of the day, and inspectors considered 76 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 78 free-text comments.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, action plans, minutes of meetings, safeguarding records and pupils' progress information.
- Pupils were listened to as they read, and the inspection team spoke to pupils to gather their views about the school.
- The inspection team met with school leaders, the chair and members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Becky Greenhalgh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Jenner	Ofsted Inspector

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