

# Inspection of a good school: Arunside School, Horsham

Blackbridge Lane, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1RR

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Inspection dates:

12 and 13 September 2023

## **Outcome**

Arunside School, Horsham continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Each day, pupils are eager to come to school. Pupils are kind and accepting of one another. They talk positively about welcoming any recently arrived pupils into their school community. Pupils and staff form warm relationships. A culture of inclusivity permeates the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) speak glowingly about the care and attention that they receive to help them flourish.

In line with the school's value of 'ambition', teachers set high expectations for pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to think and to solve challenging problems independently. There is a keenness to learn, and pupils achieve well. They enjoy earning house points or having their work displayed on the 'wow wall' in recognition of their success. Pupils benefit from a range of varied experiences. They are eager to describe their favourite activities. Pupils particularly enjoy developing bushcraft skills in their regular visits to the forest school.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The school rules are well known, and pupils respectfully follow the well-established routines. Pupils also think about how they treat their classmates and the importance of using 'kind hands' and 'kind words'.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. Careful thought has shaped what pupils will learn and when they learn it. This happens from Reception to Year 6 and ensures that pupils' knowledge builds progressively over time. Staff are aware of any difficulties pupils may have that could prevent them learning as well as they could. In lessons, pupils with SEND are given tailored support that meets their individual needs by knowledgeable staff. This helps them to confidently develop their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils achieve well across much of the curriculum. The school ensures that staff receive high-quality training to teach the curriculum well. Teachers regularly recap previous learning. New information is presented in a carefully considered way. This helps pupils

secure key knowledge in their long-term memories. The teaching of mathematics is particularly strong. In early years, children have access to a wide range of high-quality resources that help them to learn about numbers confidently. However, in some subjects, teachers do not consistently check whether pupils have learned as much as they should. Pupils, therefore, have some gaps in their understanding and cannot always recall and apply different knowledge and skills.

The school's phonics scheme precisely sets out the sounds and words that pupils should learn in a sensible order. It is taught well. Pupils develop helpful strategies to be able to read longer words. They enjoy using their 'phoneme fingers' to break words down into individual sounds. Children begin to learn to read from their first days of Reception. This helps to foster a love of reading from a young age. As one pupil said, 'Reading takes me in to a new world.' Pupils who find reading more challenging get targeted support from a range of staff and trained volunteers. This helps them continue to develop their confidence and fluency as a reader.

Pupils have a firm understanding of different faiths and cultures. Leaders ensure that the diversity of the local area is represented in the stories pupils read, the curriculum and school activities. Pupils are keen to explain their understanding of how to make a positive contribution to society. They learn to respect others' opinions in the 'democratic circles' debates. Year 6 pupils gain leadership skills when hosting these topical discussions. A wide range of trips ensure that learning extends beyond the classroom. Pupils explore the local area to learn about its unique history. Pupils prize their time spent in after-school clubs. In addition to the wide range of sporting opportunities, pupils also benefit from attending Young Engineers Club, drama practice or learning to play a musical instrument.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is impressive. They focus diligently on what they are learning. A small number of pupils who may find managing their behaviour more challenging get the help they need from the caring pastoral team. One pupil explained how helpful he finds the range of coping techniques he has learned.

There is a shared vision of excellence across the school's leaders, governors and staff. The school works well with external partners to evaluate the impact of the improvements they make. Well-informed changes are made to ensure pupils benefit from current educational thinking. Staff feel valued in their roles, and this motivates them to provide interesting and engaging experiences for the pupils in their care.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not always check precisely enough how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. This means that misconceptions are not always identified and gaps in understanding are not consistently addressed promptly. The school should continue with the steps it is taking to monitor and refine how assessment is used to help pupils build understanding over time.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2013.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125883
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10287962
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	413
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sylvia King (Interim)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Donna Jagger
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.arunside.school">www.arunside.school</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been recent changes in the governing body. At the time of the inspection, there was an interim chair of governors.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, the leader responsible for pupils with SEND, many teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with governors and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited

a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and staff to hear their views.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential Ofsted surveys for staff and pupils and the responses to Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Martin Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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