

Rusper Primary School

Rusper, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4PR

Inspection dates

27–28 June 2017

| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| 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 and management of the headteacher and the hard work of the staff team have improved the school.
- Governance is much improved. Governors have high ambitions for the school, providing effective challenge and support to leaders.
- Teaching across the school is improving rapidly. Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for their learning.
- In the early years, children are well taught and make a good start to their school life.
- Leaders check carefully on pupils' progress. They identify quickly those at risk of falling behind, and make good arrangements to help them catch up.
- Subject leaders, through effective checking on classroom practice, contribute well to improving the teaching of English and mathematics. The school is in the early stages of extending this scrutiny to the teaching of science and other subjects.
- Phonics teaching has improved and the number of pupils now reaching expected standards is higher than the national average.
- Leaders and governors make good use of extra funding provided for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress and sometimes do better than their peers.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Consequently, these pupils' needs are met well and they make good progress.
- In some classes, not enough is expected of the most able pupils and too few attain above the standards expected for their ages.
- Pupils have good opportunities to practise writing skills in a range of lessons. However, there is insufficient attention paid to developing pupils' handwriting. Recent improvements in spelling need further work to develop pupils' basic skills.
- Since the previous inspection, standards in mathematics have risen. However, pupils need to develop the fluency of basic arithmetical skills to ensure that outcomes continue to improve.
- Leaders recognise the need to improve some areas of the curriculum, in particular religious education, to deepen pupils' understanding of various beliefs and faiths.
- Attendance has improved this year through better procedures to raise its profile.
- Pupils are confident and articulate. They are kind, considerate and respectful of their peers and others.
- The vast majority of parents regard the school highly and appreciate the improvements that have been achieved this academic year.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - all teachers set sufficiently challenging work for the most able pupils to extend their thinking consistently
 - pupils apply their basic skills of spelling in all their work
 - a whole-school, agreed, consistent approach to teaching handwriting is introduced
 - pupils develop and apply their basic arithmetical skills more fluently.
- Deepen the impact of effective leadership and management, by:
 - extending the contribution which subject leaders make to improving the quality of teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:
 - pupils explore a broad curriculum that deepens knowledge and understanding in the full range of subjects, in particular religious education
 - pupils experience more opportunities to raise their awareness and understanding of the diversity of 21st century Britain.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher joined the school in September of this academic year. Ably supported by an increased senior leadership team, governors and the local authority, he has provided a sense of direction and purpose. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving rapidly and is now good.
- School leaders have successfully tackled the issues raised at the last inspection, in particular ensuring that pupils make accelerated progress in English and mathematics. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's progress, and plan effectively for its continuing improvement.
- Leaders have worked with staff to develop a deep understanding of key skills in mathematics. As a result, all staff, including support staff, have a clearer understanding of the progression of pupils' skills across the year groups.
- The school uses a program to track pupils' progress. Leaders regularly analyse pupils' progress and scrutinise their work. This ensures that pupils falling behind are rapidly identified and teachers are held to account for the progress of all pupils in their class. Teachers check their judgements of pupils' work with teachers in other local schools.
- Leaders are skilled at identifying those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those at risk of falling behind. Some teaching assistants have been trained in specific programmes, and provide well-designed additional support for these pupils so that they can catch up with their classmates. Additional money provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is, thereby, spent effectively.
- Leaders acknowledge that the curriculum focus this year has been on improving pupils' reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, all national curriculum subjects are taught. Some curriculum areas, including religious education and modern foreign languages, are underdeveloped and the progress made by pupils in these subjects is not closely monitored.
- Pupils take part in a wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities, including clubs for Lego, science, football, art and craft, tag rugby and Zumba. Learning is further enhanced by visits. For example, two classes visited the Sealife Centre to learn more about the sea creatures they were studying. Children in the early years were animated in their discussion before the visit about seeing a real shark and how to count the number of teeth it had.
- Middle leaders have been well supported by the senior leadership team. They have a clear sense of direction, understand their roles and perform their duties well. This is having a positive impact on teaching and pupils' learning in English and mathematics. Leaders have invested in high-quality training and development opportunities to ensure that staff enhance their skills. For example, subject leaders, including the new science leader, have all attended training regarding leading their specific areas. Further work is now required in monitoring the development of pupils' skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics, particularly in science.

- The curriculum is mostly modified effectively to meet the needs of groups of pupils of differing abilities and needs. Work is sometimes not sufficiently modified in lessons to fully challenge the most able pupils. This slows their progress and so they do not achieve as highly as they could.
- The great priority given to pupils' welfare and personal development helps pupils' learning. As a result, they achieve well in school. The learning mentor's work with pupils who have particular barriers to their learning helps these pupils relate well to others, enjoy learning and aim to do their best. One parent commented, 'The support my son receives for his emotional well-being is outstanding and he is now making good progress.'
- Leaders have implemented more robust systems to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive targeted and focused support to meet their needs. As a result, the differences in achievement between pupils who receive pupil premium funding and their peers are diminishing or have diminished completely.
- The school makes good use of the primary physical education and sport premium. There is a clear focus on developing staff confidence and competence, and enhancing pupils' physical skills and healthy lifestyles.
- The curriculum provides support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is promoted through lessons, assemblies and the school's values. British values are promoted through special events and in lessons when, for example, pupils become aware of their rights and responsibilities. Pupils are aware of diversity and tolerance, but would benefit from gaining more knowledge about other faiths and ways of life in modern Britain.
- Parents who spoke to the inspector, and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, commented positively on the improvements in the school since the appointment of the new headteacher. One parent spoke for many by saying: 'Since the new headteacher joined the school, the atmosphere is open, warm, friendly and caring to pupils, staff and parents. He has a can-do approach and provides pupils with opportunities to enrich and challenge them.'
- Staff who responded to the questionnaire indicate that they are well supported in their professional development. They say that leaders do all they can to ensure that the school has a motivated, respected and effective teaching staff and are overwhelmingly supportive of the leadership of the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and share the same high aspirations as the leadership team. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. They are well informed by the headteacher and their own monitoring and strategic work, which enables them to ask increasingly searching questions. As a result, they can evaluate how effectively teaching and pastoral support meet pupils' needs.
- Governors ensure that safeguarding systems are robust. Governors with specific responsibilities, such as safeguarding, undertake training to be up to date with current legislation and inform other governors.

- Governors have a good awareness of the information about pupils' achievement. This enables them to question the progress and attainment of different groups. They check that additional funding is making a difference to pupils' performance in order to determine that it is being used effectively.
- Governors are aware of the need to ensure that the school website continues to meet statutory requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View agreed that the school keeps their children safe and that they are well looked after. Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe around the school and online.
- Training for all staff is up to date and any new requirements are immediately brought to the attention of all staff.
- Effective systems and procedures are in place and are fit for purpose. Staff know what they should do if they have any concerns. Record-keeping of concerns is well organised.
- Leaders check that everybody who works with pupils is suitable to do so. Leaders and some governors are trained in safer recruitment of staff. All visitors to the school are checked in and wear badges so pupils and staff can identify them.
- The headteacher has raised the profile and importance of good attendance. As a result, attendance has improved this year for most pupils and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has dropped.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is improving steadily because there is now a culture of high expectations in the school.
- Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very good. Pupils want to do well and work hard. They are proud of their school and their achievements and know that their opinions and efforts are valued.
- The very large majority of teachers have good subject knowledge. This allows them to make learning interesting for pupils. As a result, pupils readily engage in activities and develop their curiosity and an appetite for learning. They settle quickly at the start of lessons, are attentive when teachers give instructions, and work well together in group activities.
- Pupils are increasingly responsive to the school's promotion of a 'can-do' culture. This is giving them confidence to take risks in their learning and develop as resilient learners.
- The teaching of phonics has improved and is now effective. Younger pupils are taught well how to link letters and sounds and this allows them to make significant progress in their ability to read. Across the rest of the school, reading is taught well. Pupils read

confidently and with enjoyment. They have a wide range of interesting books, which motivate them to read.

- Teachers are mostly using consistent approaches to teaching grammar, punctuation and spelling, all identified as areas of weakness in the previous inspection. This has helped pupils to make better progress in writing. However, leaders are correctly aware that there needs to be a continued focus, particularly in spelling, to further raise achievement. The teaching of handwriting is not consistent throughout the school. This means that not all pupils are joining their handwriting by the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils are confident to write because they are prepared well for any writing task. This includes developing their own writing 'toolkits' as guidance. Displays of pupils' writing around the school and work in their books show that pupils have many opportunities to use their writing skills across a range of subjects and genres.
- In mathematics, teachers have focused on developing questioning, problem-solving and reasoning skills. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to solve challenging problems and to explain how they have carried out the calculations. Leaders have, however, identified that there is a need to focus on developing and improving mathematical fluency in order that pupils become more accurate.
- There are occasions when teachers' expectations are not high enough to match what pupils can achieve. Successful strategies used to build on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and enable them to work at greater depth are not always evident across all classes. The demands made on the most able pupils, in particular, are not always sufficiently challenging to enable them to achieve high standards.
- Homework supports the work that pupils carry out in school. Parents understand how well their children are doing and know how to support them because informative, termly, progress reports are shared with them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Staff know the pupils well and, consequently, support their needs very effectively and they are well looked after.
- When pupils arrive at school for the start of the school day, after being greeted personally by the headteacher, they walk in calmly and purposefully, ready to learn. Clear expectations and good role modelling by adults mean that, throughout the day, pupils make the transition between activities and into breaktimes smoothly and sensibly.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They understand that bullying can take different forms and say that any bullying in school is very rare. If any problems should arise, they are confident to turn to staff and know they will be listened to and helped. They know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations in and out of school, including when using the internet.

- Pupils are friendly and polite and show caring attitudes towards each other and adults. Pupils have a strong sense of pride in the school and in their achievements, which they are keen to share with visitors.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In and around school, pupils behave in a calm and orderly manner because there are clear and consistent behaviour management systems and high expectations. In lessons, pupils are attentive and get on with their work without disruption.
- The spacious and well-resourced play areas are delightful places for pupils to meet and socialise. Pupils play nicely together, ensuring that no one is left out as they include lots of other pupils of all age groups in their games. There is a good level of supervision and staff interact with pupils, leading and encouraging play. Pupils understand why there are rules about who can use the higher climbing equipment and there is a lower version for younger pupils to enjoy.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The effective action taken to improve teaching and learning has resulted in improved outcomes for pupils across the school. This is seen in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Work in books, as well as the rigorous analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, shows that pupils currently in the school are making good progress from their starting points.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2 was above that found nationally in reading, but below the national average in writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching a greater depth was below national figures in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2016, the proportion that reached the expected standards for their age was above that found nationally in reading, below national figures in writing and just below in mathematics. However, too few pupils achieved the highest standards in writing or mathematics.
- Progress between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 in 2016 was not significantly different from that found nationally. It was strongest in reading and weakest in mathematics. The school's information shows that, in all year groups, the vast majority of pupils are currently making at least the progress expected by the school and some are making more rapid progress.
- Improved teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1 is expected to result in a well-above-average proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2017. This is a significant improvement on outcomes in 2016, which were well below the national average.
- In some classes, the most able pupils currently in the school, including those who are disadvantaged, are challenged to achieve well but this is not the case in all classes.

Leaders have correctly identified that challenges should be greater and expectations higher to ensure that this group consistently achieves high standards in their learning.

- The school's strategies to ensure that additional funding makes a difference in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are effective. Consequently, these pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress from their starting points because staff ensure that work is set at the right level for them. The extra support pupils receive from teachers and teaching assistants provides the guidance they need to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have a good overview of provision in the early years and a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, children are making good progress.
- Historically, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the early years has alternated between being above the national average in 2014 and 2016 but below national figures in 2015. School leaders have taken effective action to ensure that progress is now consistently good. As a result, standards continue to rise. Outcomes in 2017 are expected to be at least in line with the national average. This means that children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- School leaders have not allocated additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to the early years provision as there have been no qualifying pupils in the Reception class in recent years.
- Children settle well when they join the Reception class because leaders and staff manage their transition from home or other settings well.
- Adults in the early years communicate well with parents from the start of their children's journey in the early years. They share regular progress reports with parents. The school strongly encourages parents to contribute to their children's early education. As a result, a large number of parents are involved in weekly phonics sessions with their child. However, children's learning journeys (their records of what they have achieved) do not always show clearly what they are learning.
- Children gain much from a stimulating and well-resourced environment. They explore an exciting range of activities and resources inside and outside the classroom and are inspired to pursue their learning in different ways. They sustain concentration for long periods because they find the activities interesting. Children respond positively to adults' instructions and interact well with each other. They are keen to continue with activities independently, for example water spraying number bonds of ten while singing the 'number bond' song.
- Adults develop extremely positive relationships with children and make sure that they are safe and happy. Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust. Children are confident, independent and polite. They behave sensibly because they know what is expected of them.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 125850 |
| Local authority | West Sussex |
| Inspection number | 10032836 |

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

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| 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 | 98 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Emma Worskett |
| Headteacher | Nick Avey |
| Telephone number | 01293 871272 |
| Website | www.rusperprimary.eschools.co.uk |
| Email address | head@rusper.w-sussex.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 14–15 May 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. The inspector observed learning in eight lessons. This included six joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to pupils about their learning.
- The inspector talked to parents and carers as they brought their children to school and examined 31 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- The views of nine staff and 22 pupils who completed the online questionnaires were considered.
- Meetings were held with pupils, three governors, a representative from the local authority and school leaders.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents. These included the school's own information on pupils' current progress, curriculum documents, records of governors' work, leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding of pupils. In particular, the inspector examined records of work undertaken to raise standards.

Inspection team

Marcia Goodwin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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