

Deerhurst and Apperley Church of England Primary School

Apperley, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL19 4DQ

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher's exceptional vision and ambition are reasons for the school's success and the rapid rate of improvement since the previous inspection. She has the highest expectations of staff, pupils and parents and carers.
- The headteacher is extremely well supported by her leadership team. Together, they are uncompromising in their determination to give pupils the best possible education and to keep them safe.
- Leaders have very effective systems for tracking pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. As yet, these are not as well developed in other subjects.
- Teachers consistently motivate and inspire pupils. They use their very detailed knowledge about pupils' achievement to set work that fully meets individual needs.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled in their roles. They provide excellent support for pupils both in lessons and during small-group work.
- Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make rapid progress. Standards of attainment are high in each key stage; pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' behaviour, levels of concentration and respect for each other are exemplary. They take great pride in their work.
- The curriculum is rich and varied, capturing pupils' interests across subjects and developing their personal skills extremely well. The promotion of pupils' understanding of British values is woven skilfully through lessons.
- Governors are very knowledgeable about the school. This enables them to not only support but challenge decisions and hold leaders fully to account. They do this especially well in relation to pupils' achievement.
- Children in the early years make an excellent start to their school life as the teaching is exciting and motivates children to want to learn.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They feel completely safe in school because they trust staff and know they provide great care.
- Parents strongly agree that their children are happy, secure, and well looked after. They praise the exceptional education the school provides and are proud of the progress their children make.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the highly effective systems for checking achievement in reading, writing and mathematics are matched in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The school has made rapid and significant improvements since the previous inspection because of the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. She is relentless in her determination to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders are constantly looking for new ways to help pupils succeed and achieve even higher standards. Staff morale is high and everyone works together enthusiastically to secure further improvements.
- Excellent procedures for tracking and checking pupils' achievement enable leaders to identify any gaps in learning and respond promptly with additional support or challenge. Leaders recognise that the highly effective procedures in place in English and mathematics are not fully mirrored in other subjects.
- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school's performance. They identify clear areas for development based on careful analysis of pupils' progress and needs. They set demanding targets and closely monitor the progress and impact of their actions.
- A strong culture of learning permeates the school and staff are keen to develop their practice. Leaders continually check the quality of teaching and are rigorous in holding staff accountable for their pupils' achievement. Teachers welcome and respond positively to the incisive and constructive feedback. Staff embrace the wide range of training and development opportunities to increase their effectiveness.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is skilfully targeted to make sure that it supports individuals well. The successful deployment of this funding can be seen in the strong progress these pupils make, which is in line with their peers. Funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used equally well so that these pupils also make at least good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Pupils are inspired to learn because the curriculum is planned to ignite their interest, while still being firmly centred on the development of key skills. For example, experiencing what life was like during the Second World War during the visit to Swindon's Steam Railway Museum enabled the older pupils to extend their historical knowledge as well producing high-quality writing. All pupils are involved in enterprise projects where they learn the life skills of marketing, decision-making and financial management. Activities such as these have a marked impact on their social development and entrepreneurial skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of British values. Pupils learn about democracy through the 'Parliament' workshops and by electing their councillors and sports leaders. They talk with pride about the responsibilities they undertake and their contribution to the school community. Pupils demonstrate their feelings of spirituality and their sensitivity and empathy to others in remarkable ways. For example, they created a memorial in the school's spiritual garden for a former pupil who died.

- The primary physical education and sport funding is used well to extend the range of extra-curricular sports activities on offer, such as fencing and archery. Pupils were involved in the decision to use this year's funding to construct a running path around the field. The daily 'mile run' is greatly enhancing pupils' levels of fitness and well-being.
- Parents are very positive about the work of the school. They are appreciative of how well the school supports their children, particularly those children who have SEN and/or disabilities. As one parent commented, 'My child is so successful here and making progress, both academically and socially.'

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly ambitious for the school and fully share the headteacher's exceptional vision and direction. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's work because the headteacher keeps them well informed and also because they check assiduously for themselves. They are forthright in their challenge to leaders, especially about pupils' achievement, and follow their questions with further visits to the school to review progress.
- Governors carefully monitor the use of additional funding, both the pupil premium and the physical education and school sport funding, to make sure they are improving outcomes for pupils. The governor who champions disadvantaged pupils meets regularly with the headteacher to check the impact of the pupil premium on their progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and there is a strong culture of vigilance. Leaders place a high priority on ensuring that the safety of pupils is everyone's responsibility. They check that policies and systems are followed and these are reviewed annually. Procedures for recruiting and vetting staff before they are appointed follow the statutory guidance stringently. Staff and governors receive regular training in the latest requirements for safeguarding, including how to keep pupils safe from extremism and radicalisation. They are well trained in identifying possible signs of harm and are clear about how to report any concerns about pupils. All risks are thoroughly assessed and updated as necessary, for example with regard to fire safety and educational visits.
- Leaders know the families of pupils who attend the school very well and are vigilant about pupils' welfare, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure that pupils receive the care and support they need. Parents appreciate the lengths to which the school goes to make sure there is an inclusive and welcoming environment where every child thrives. Pupils confirmed that they feel secure in school because staff are very supportive, saying that 'there is always someone you can talk to if you're worried'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers use their subject knowledge extremely well to plan work that continually builds on pupils' prior knowledge and develops their understanding. The impact of this can be seen in pupils' rapid progress throughout the school and their high attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning because teachers have high expectations of their achievement. Pupils enjoy the challenges to their thinking and are fully engaged in lessons.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught extremely well and are used very effectively to support learning in other subjects such as history, religious education and science. Key skills in calculation are taught very thoroughly and teachers set work that enables pupils to develop reasoning skills very effectively. They teach the features of language and aspects of grammar very thoroughly so that pupils produce high-quality writing.
- Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers. They support groups of pupils and individuals very effectively, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Consequently, learning is highly productive and not a minute of time is wasted.
- Phonics is taught well, ensuring that pupils make good progress. In phonics lessons, teachers make sure pupils are appropriately challenged. They give them immediate feedback and encourage them to correct their work. Pupils use their phonics knowledge well to work out unfamiliar words, always checking back to clarify the meaning.
- Teachers make the learning appropriately challenging for learners of all abilities, including the most able pupils. The new approach to teaching mathematics has a strong emphasis on developing reasoning skills, ensuring pupils' thinking is stretched to the full. This enables teachers to constantly demand more of pupils. For example, the most able pupils in Year 6 were challenged to simplify fractions and explain their method. When they had achieved this they were immediately challenged to simplify improper fractions to deepen their understanding still further.
- Across the school, pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about their learning. Work in pupils' books shows that skills are well embedded and most have made rapid progress since the start of the year, particularly in writing. An example of this is in Year 2 where pupils have progressed from writing in simple sentences at the start of the year to using adventurous vocabulary in well-constructed stories.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very effective and contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive that they feel safe and happy in school. Parents appreciate the excellent care their children receive.
- Pupils undertake a wide range of responsibilities very sensibly and with great pride. House captains, lab technicians and school councillors carry out their duties conscientiously and develop excellent leadership skills. This prepares them extremely well to be responsible citizens of the future.
- Pupils understand very clearly what constitutes bullying. They say that poor behaviour or bullying seldom happen, though they have complete confidence in staff to sort out any problems quickly and effectively.
- Online safety has a high priority and pupils are taught how to stay safe online both in and out of school. Pupils know not to give out any personal information and to report cyber bullying should it occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are exemplary. Pupils show deep levels of concentration and are always keen to do their very best. They cooperate together extremely well, settle quickly to work and enjoy the increased levels of challenge in their learning.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent behaviour at all times of the day in and around school. In conversation, pupils are very enthusiastic about school, saying how much they enjoy taking part in all the enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs on offer. Older pupils support younger ones very well by organising lunchtime clubs and sports activities as playground leaders.
- Pupils talk respectfully to staff and to each other. They show good empathy, particularly toward pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They demonstrate in their care for each other a clear understanding of equality.
- Breakfast club ensures a calm and happy start to the day and helps to improve punctuality for the few pupils where this has been an issue. The Nursery class is very important part of the school's provision in building children's confidence. Parents say that the transition to the Reception class is smooth and very successful in preparing children for school life.
- The school has the highest expectations of attendance and punctuality. Leaders monitor any absence very rigorously. Consequently, attendance is above average and improving quickly for the few individuals where this has been a concern.
- Staff, pupils and their parents agreed that behaviour is good and that pupils are very supportive of each other. Pupils said they would recommend this school to others. As one pupil commented, 'It's easy to make friends here and the school's values help you to be kind.'

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Children join the school in the Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding typical for their age. Pupils make rapid progress because of the carefully targeted, high-quality teaching. They achieve outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics significantly above national figures by the time they leave the school.
- Attainment at the expected standard is well above national figures in reading, writing and mathematics in both key stage 1 and 2. It is also above the national figures for the higher standard in each subject and in each key stage.
- Progress at the end of key stage 2 has significantly improved since the previous inspection. In 2016, pupils' progress was significantly above the national average in writing. In 2017, it was significantly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, putting the school in the top 10% nationally.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics is well above national figures. These skills help pupils to become fluent readers very quickly. Pupils enjoy reading an extensive range of literature, developing their comprehension skills very effectively. Older pupils speak confidently and capably about the styles of different authors.
- The most able pupils enjoy the high levels of challenge presented to them. The quality and presentation of their work is outstanding across different subjects. They demonstrate a deep understanding of their learning, for example in science when explaining why shadows lengthen towards the end of the day.
- There are no differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils. This is because pupil premium and special educational needs funding is used well to support the small number of eligible pupils in school so that they make at least good progress.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years is extremely well led and managed. Leaders begin every day by greeting children and their parents at the gate; this ensures that a very strong bond develops between home and school. Children are encouraged to come into school by themselves, soon becoming independent learners.
- Teaching staff understand very well how young children learn. They carefully plan activities to ensure that all children develop their curiosity and enjoy their learning. For example, the 'treasure hunt' in phonics for the hidden words was an exciting activity that developed children's language and reading skills effectively.
- Teachers check children's progress precisely, enabling them to adjust the learning to better suit individual needs. Disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are nurtured well and make progress in line with others. Carefully targeted activities ensure that the most able children achieve their potential.
- Children's work in books is of high quality and shows excellent progress. Early reading, writing and number skills are well developed so that children achieve outcomes that are above national figures. As a result, children start Year 1 as confident learners.

- Children's behaviour is impeccable and children are very enthusiastic about their learning. Routines are well established and consistently applied by staff. The safety of every child is paramount and this is clearly reflected in the vigilance of the well-trained staff.
- Parents are delighted with how quickly their children settle into school and with the excellent progress they make. They find staff to be friendly and approachable. As one parent put it, 'My child is making amazing progress and I couldn't ask for more of a school.'

School details

Unique reference number	115619
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10042662

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Aaron Mulligan
Headteacher	Jayne Neveu
Telephone number	01452 780374
Website	www.deerhurst.gloucs.sch.uk
Email address	admin@deerhurst.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2015

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils are taught in three mixed-aged classes.
- The school operates a daily breakfast club and a pre-school Nursery class for three days a week, managed by the governing body. Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. Children in the Reception Year attend school on a full-time basis.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2017. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning across the school. All observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. In addition, she made visits to classrooms, the dining hall, and the playground.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and school leaders. The inspector also spoke with an adviser from the local authority, who supports the school.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day, met with two parents during the inspection and took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and written comments. She also took account of the 13 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. She examined information on current pupils' progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding procedures and the plans for the use of the physical education and sport premium.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, talked to them in classrooms and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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