

St James' CofE Primary School, Coldwaltham

Church Lane, Coldwaltham, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1LW

Inspection dates

8–9 March 2017

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher's actions to tackle weaknesses are bringing improvements across the school. Through his effective leadership, he has stabilised staffing and improved teaching, so pupils are now catching up to expected levels.
- The recently appointed governing body has rapidly got up to speed with its role and school priorities. Governors have begun to provide effective support and challenge to school leaders.
- Middle leaders are developing their skills and knowledge to drive improvements in their areas. However, these leaders recognise that they need to monitor their subject areas more closely.
- Outcomes are improving and more pupils are working at expected standards. Leaders and teachers check how well individuals are doing and use this information to identify pupils who need further support. Consequently, those who have fallen behind are now being supported to get to where they need to be.
- Teaching is improving and is now good. There are challenges in some classes due to the wide range of pupils' abilities. Leaders are supporting teachers to ensure they meet the range of pupils' needs as well as possible.
- Provision in the early years is not yet as effective as in the rest of the school. The early years leader is developing her skills and knowledge rapidly but, as yet, activities to secure learning do not sustain children's interest or meet their needs well enough.
- Recording and reporting pupils' progress has been problematic for leaders. They have begun to adapt the information they record on individuals to help them see where pupils are not doing as well, both in year groups and in subjects. However, there is more to do.
- Pupils behave well and, often, very well. They treat each other with kindness and respect. Older pupils take care of younger pupils, for example in the playground or when walking to church.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported very well. Through lessons and assemblies, pupils talk about how they can show care and respect for others. This understanding is reflected in the way they treat their peers and adults.
- Pupils are well cared for and safe. Virtually all the parents who commented, say they have confidence in the way staff care for their children. Attendance is in line with other schools but more pupils are persistently absent.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the early years provision is as effective as provision in the rest of the school, by:
 - planning activities which sustain pupils' interest and challenge them
 - encouraging boys and girls to play together by organising activities that appeal to both
 - structuring lessons effectively so that younger and older pupils' needs are met well.
- Develop leadership, by:
 - adapting progress information, so that leaders and teachers can be held accountable
 - developing middle leaders further to monitor teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility and use this information to identify actions for improvement
 - ensuring that the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent reduces so that the percentage of pupils with good attendance is in line with, or better than, other schools.
- Embed improvements in teaching so that:
 - teachers structure lessons carefully to meet their pupils' specific needs where there is a wide range of abilities within classes
 - pupils catch up to at least expected standards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has demonstrated resilience, commitment and determination to improve teaching and outcomes at St James. He has successfully overcome a number of obstacles and challenges so that the school now provides a good standard of education. The senior teacher provides effective support to the headteacher and leads the school successfully for the half of the week when the headteacher is absent.
- All staff and governors support the headteacher's vision and determination for the school to be the best it can. Standards across the school have risen rapidly in the past 12 months as a result of staffing becoming more stable and a change of governance.
- Leaders check and analyse small steps in progress each half term. This information provides evidence that pupils are developing their depth of understanding and coverage. Any pupils who are falling behind are supported well to catch up. In mathematics, where progress is broken down into a number of small steps, developments are evident. This is less obvious in writing and reading, where progress steps are larger and fewer. Leaders are sensibly considering how best to use the information they have to identify where pupils in year groups and subjects do not do as well as expected.
- The headteacher formally checks teaching each term and uses this information when reviewing annual performance of staff. He visits classes each week and provides useful informal feedback so that teaching is continually being checked and improved. At present, all checks on teaching fall to the headteacher. He has sensibly put plans in place to develop this aspect of middle leadership.
- Funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well to help these pupils make progress in their learning. Leaders plan targets and support carefully, and analyse how well pupils are doing to make sure they are improving. As a result, these pupils do well.
- Leaders are aware of the needs of the very few disadvantaged pupils. They take account of these pupils' specific needs when planning how the funding should be spent. They check how well these pupils are doing, and report on the impact of the funding on pupils' progress, attendance and well-being.
- Sports funding is used effectively so that all pupils now participate in sports activities outside school, such as dance, multi-sports and rounders. A sports coach delivers well-planned and fun lessons which develop pupils' skills and provides useful staff training to improve teachers' skills and confidence.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and well planned to motivate pupils to want to learn. It is supported well by a range of visits and other activities. On the day of the inspection, for example, an external company led an assembly which supported pupils' spiritual, moral and social development effectively. However, younger pupils are less clear about British values, which tend to only be taught in Years 5 and 6.
- Almost all parents say they have confidence in the leadership of the school. Many commented on how happy their children are and how much they love coming to

school. Parents also comment on the hardworking and committed staff, and recognise that the school has improved.

Governance of the school

- Following significant changes in governance in July, the new governing body has acted with speed and determination to become effective. Considerable training and development has enabled governors to know and fulfil their responsibilities for safeguarding and holding leaders accountable. As a result, in a very short time, they have begun to provide effective challenge and support.
- Governors ask appropriate questions to ensure that they know how well pupils are doing. They rightly recognise that the information they receive does not help them to be clear about progress over time across the school. They are working with leaders to ensure that they have the right information to do this. Recent visits to the school have begun to provide useful evidence for both governors and leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Appropriate checks are carried out and recorded systematically, indicating that staff are safe to work with pupils. The single central record is detailed and thorough. Leaders and governors ensure that safe recruitment processes are followed, such as checking gaps in employment and following up references.
- Governors oversee safeguarding appropriately. They are involved in the annual safeguarding audit and take steps to improve practice where possible. Governors and staff are appropriately trained and understand their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. Staff record their concerns appropriately and follow the school's process for ensuring that action is taken. When necessary, leaders involve outside agencies and appropriate action is taken. However, leaders recognise that records and filing could be more easily accessible.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching in key stages 1 and 2 meets pupils' needs well. Teachers plan sequences of lessons to successfully develop skills and knowledge, setting activities at different levels to meet pupils' abilities. However, at times, an approach which works for some children is not as useful in supporting learning for others. Leaders and teachers recognise this and are working to resolve this as quickly as possible. Despite this, day-to-day, pupils are making good progress and those that had fallen behind are now catching up.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support. In the short time most of them have been at the school, they have attended useful training and development, enabling them to meet pupils' needs well. They work well with individuals and groups, giving them enough help to make progress without doing too much for them.
- Phonics and reading skills are taught well. Pupils have daily opportunities to read, and weekly lessons help them to improve their fluency, comprehension and inference.

Reading is promoted across the curriculum when pupils research topics and read for information, for example in history and science.

- Teaching of mathematics is effective in meeting pupils' needs well. Teachers provide a range of practical equipment so pupils can explore concepts and develop their understanding before using what they have learned to solve problems and carry out investigations. For example, in one lesson pupils used equipment to explore fractions before working out problems shown as pictures. Occasionally, teachers move on to abstract concepts slightly early, when more practical and picture work would be beneficial.
- Teaching of writing is improving. Teachers systematically develop pupils' understanding of grammar and sentence construction. However, a few pupils focus so much on the technical features of writing that they lose ground in vocabulary and description. Writing is developed well across the curriculum and pupils have a good range of opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes.
- Teachers and teaching assistants meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. This is particularly the case when pupils are taught in ability groups with work adapted to exactly the right level. There are a few occasions when these pupils are set work that is the same as for the rest of the class, so it is too hard and their progress slows.
- The most able pupils are set challenges to help extend their thinking and deepen their learning. Pupils enjoy working on harder tasks and they say that the work is at the right level for them. Although the numbers are small, proportionately, in some year groups a high number of pupils are currently on track to achieve more than the expected standard this year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Through lessons and assemblies, pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is supported well.
- The forest school lessons encourage pupils to risk assess and evaluate safety, learning how to keep themselves safe. Pupils also learn about being safe through being taught to use the internet safely and through Bikeability. Year 5 and 6 pupils participate in a range of workshops off-site, including personal safety, which prepare them well for their move to secondary school.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They behave respectfully towards adults and treat each other with respect, care and kindness. They like being set in 'houses' for activities, as they say this helps them to get to know pupils from across the school even better. Pupils say there is very little bullying and it is sorted out quickly.
- Pupils learn about being healthy and fit through science and physical education lessons. The school promotes healthy eating through its policies and the quality of food served.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good, and often better. Pupils display courtesy and patience; for example, when two classes were waiting for the other class before going to church pupils stood patiently and calmly. There are slight variations in behaviour when adults do not make their expectations clear enough.
- Pupils are clear about rewards and sanctions. They appreciate the rewards and are competitive about earning as many as they can.
- Behaviour records show that all incidents are recorded and followed up appropriately. Currently leaders do not report their analysis to governors but recognise the need to do so.
- Attendance continues to be broadly in line with national figures. Leaders' work to reduce persistent absence has resulted in more pupils being in school; however, this is not yet fully resolved.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils across key stages 1 and 2 are working at the expected standard, or catching up to where they should be. Where progress is less strong, this tends to be in classes with a wide range of ability. Leaders and teachers are working to rapidly ensure that all pupils make equally good progress.
- In the early years, in 2016, the percentage of children who achieved a good level of development was above the national average. Current children are on track to achieve the same this year. However, due to the limited range of activities provided, children do not make consistent gains across all areas of learning.
- In 2016, phonics results from Year 1 appeared to decline. However, the results were based on national comparisons. Due to the very small cohort, these were not, statistically, an accurate reflection. Pupils are currently making expected progress in their phonics work.
- At the end of Year 2, pupils did not do as well as they should have. This is because teaching did not meet pupils' needs well enough over the year. The high number of staff changes, which was not the fault of the school, meant that teachers were not sufficiently clear about each pupil's attainment and next steps. Nor were they clear about what pupils had and had not been taught. Current teaching of Year 2 is helping pupils to make better progress. However, this very small year group is unlikely to meet the national average again this year.
- At the end of Year 6, pupils did not achieve as well as expected in mathematics and writing. This reflects the legacy of weak teaching these pupils had experienced. Although pupils made significant gains during the year, it was not quite enough to ensure that these pupils reached the expected standard. Tracking of current pupils shows that outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are likely to be broadly in line with national averages, despite the small cohort.
- Work in books shows good progress. Presentation is variable and tends to reflect expectations over time, rather than those of the current class teachers. For example, in Year 3 standards of presentation are high and pupils take pride in their work. Year 4,

who are in the same class, do not present their work as well. This is improving over time as the current teachers embed their expectations.

- The most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. They receive effective teaching and support and their progress is checked carefully.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils produce good-quality work. Topic books reflect the wide range of skills and knowledge that pupils develop. Pupils make good progress in music as a result of the good-quality, weekly music lessons they receive.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Where children's needs are not met well enough, she seeks advice as to how improvements can be made. However, although teaching is improving for these children, their needs are not met as well as they need to be.
- All staff who work with the early years children take good care of them and keep them safe. The training and development they have received has ensured that these children are well cared for and that safeguarding is effective.
- The very recent addition of a roof to the outside environment means that this area is now used more frequently and children can use this area for a range of activities. During the inspection, a group of boys were carrying sand and water, with some spillages, to create a 'dinosaur home'. It successfully sustained their interest for some time.
- Children are encouraged to select from a range of activities, including play dough, painting, sand and water play, writing and role play. However, because these activities are not as appealing as they could be, children tend to gravitate towards the activities they are most comfortable with. Typically boys select messy play or construction activities, while girls play together, dressing up and role playing. Consequently, they do not develop their skills across the full breadth of learning and the most able children do not have enough opportunities to extend their thinking.
- Staff have a good understanding of what children can do and what they need to learn next. They are beginning to plan activities to meet children's interests and move them on in their learning. For example, for one child, who likes caring for animals, staff created a vet sign and area, so she could treat her dinosaurs. However, this individual planning is in the early stages.
- Children are happy and enjoy coming to school. They play well with each other, taking turns and sharing well.

School details

Unique reference number	125978
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10024534

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	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Wratten and Annie Hewitt
Headteacher	Jon Gilbert
Telephone number	01798 872196
Website	www.st-james-coldwaltham.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	head@st-james-coldwaltham.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a small school located in a rural village, with three classes of mixed ages. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 are taught together, as are pupils from Years 2 to 4, and pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils come from a wide area around the school. Children in the early years provision attend school full time.
- The school works collaboratively with Amberley CofE First School, sharing a headteacher, although the schools have not formally federated. There are separate governing bodies for each school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is higher than average.
- Since the last inspection there has been significant change of teaching staff, teaching assistants and governors.
- In September, a private nursery, called Chuckleberries, relocated to the school. It is subject to a separate inspection process.
- In 2016 there were too few pupils in Year 6 to report on the school's performance in relation to the floor standards. These are the minimum expectations set by the government for the attainment and progress of pupils in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty's Inspector met with the headteacher, other leaders, teaching assistants and governors. She met with advisers from the Diocese of Chichester and West Sussex local authority.
- The inspector visited all classes. She observed seven lessons, several of which were seen jointly with the headteacher. She also made several short visits to classes.
- Parents' views were gathered through informal discussions at the end of the school day and through 27 responses to Parent View.
- Pupils were spoken to informally in the playground and in lessons, as well as in a formal meeting.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation document, the improvement plan, performance appraisals, governors' minutes and reports, safeguarding policies and records, progress and attainment information and reports about attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Louise Adams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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