

Arundel Court Primary and Nursery School

Northam Street, Portsmouth, PO1 1JE

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Occasionally, progress in reading is outstanding.
- Effective, supportive teaching that engages pupils well makes sure they are keen and motivated to learn.
- Outstanding provision in the early years enables children to get off to a flying start with their learning.
- A rich curriculum, that includes excellent school productions, art and book weeks, go-karting, visits and visitors, enhances pupils' learning exceptionally well.
- Thorough checks on pupils' progress ensure that those falling behind, especially disadvantaged pupils, get the support they need to help them catch up.
- Excellent relationships support pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and their outstanding behaviour. Pupils feel very safe in school and fully confident of adult support should they need it.
- There is strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that ensures pupils get on very well together.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong, caring leadership that puts pupils' welfare, personal and academic achievement at the forefront of all they do. Teaching and achievement are good and behaviour excellent.
- Senior and middle leaders, and governors, fully support the school's caring ethos. They focus on continuous improvement, effective teaching and drive for high achievement. All staff work very well together to create a harmonious, positive learning environment in which pupils thrive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Feedback in mathematics is not always regular enough, or specific enough, to move pupils' learning on effectively.
- Spelling and boys' writing at Key Stage 2, although accelerating rapidly, are not yet consistently good.
- Leaders are not precise enough in setting goals for improving boys' writing at Key Stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 35 lessons or part lessons, of which two were jointly observed with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the headteacher and other senior staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 22 responses to the online Parent view survey and the 18 written responses to the parent questionnaire collected during the inspection. They also spoke to several parents when they brought their children to school. The inspectors considered the responses to the 87 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including: the school's own information on pupils' current progress; planning and checks on the quality of teaching; assessment; the new curriculum; the school's self evaluation; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the sports premium action plan; and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6.

Inspection team

Janet Sinclair, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephanie Matthews	Additional Inspector
Violet McLaren	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Arundel Court Primary and Nursery is a well-above-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is high. This is additional government funding for pupils who are looked after or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. An above average proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- Children attend the early years classes full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school opened as a primary school in September 2013. Prior to this, the infant and junior schools were federated under the leadership of the current headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The school runs an on-site breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - in mathematics, feedback to pupils is more regular and clearly tells them what they need to do to improve their work
 - spelling and boys' writing improve so that they are consistently good.
- Ensure that senior leaders place a sharper focus on improving boys' writing, across Key Stage 2.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a strong, clear, unequivocal vision for the school based on high-quality pastoral care and an enriched curriculum that ensures pupils develop a love of learning. She is very ably supported by her deputy headteacher and senior staff who have created a strong staff team. They are all committed to her vision and work tirelessly to ensure pupils achieve well both academically and pastorally. As a result, teaching is good and behaviour is outstanding. There is clear capacity for further improvement.
- Senior and middle leaders are dedicated to providing good-quality provision for the pupils within a caring, supportive community. They work well to improve provision in their areas. For example, the new curriculum is in place and they have done much to improve both mathematics and writing so that achievement is now mainly good.
- The school has an accurate view of its provision. A clear and detailed plan that identifies areas for improvement is the cornerstone of all improvement activity. It is regularly reviewed to ensure the school knows how well it is doing.
- Senior and middle leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching and learning so are fully aware of where further development is needed. For example, they have identified feedback in mathematics, spelling and a continuing drive to engage boys fully in their writing as areas to improve.
- The school supports a good number of trainee teachers who were unanimous in their praise for the very effective support that leaders provide for them.
- There is a thorough approach to setting targets for staff linked to their pay. All staff know what they are expected to achieve in terms of their teaching, pupils' achievement and their wider responsibilities within the school. Those spoken to were very positive about the impact of the management of their performance.
- The school keeps detailed records of pupils' progress including the progress of different groups. These are helping to ensure equality of opportunity and deal with any discrimination. They also help to support good relationships. However, although leaders have done much to improve writing, particularly boys' writing, their actions are not always precise enough to enable boys to catch up fully.
- The pupil premium is used extremely well to ensure disadvantaged pupils make similar good progress to their peers. The school provides high levels of pastoral support for them through its designated pastoral team. In addition, they get help in class from teaching assistants and individual teacher support if they fall behind. The school is successfully closing the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and the others.
- The school uses the primary physical education and sport premium well to provide swimming lessons for all pupils, lunchtime play equipment and a 'fit for life' club in the morning. The school has appointed a physical education director to provide training and support for all staff. All of these actions mean pupils are more involved in physical activity and are becoming fitter. Staff are more confident in teaching sport.
- The school provides an effective range of subjects that enable pupils to achieve well in literacy and numeracy. Other subjects are covered well through topics such as those on the Egyptians and the Tudor ship, 'The Mary Rose'. The curriculum provides excellent enrichment through visits, visitors and school trips. For example, pupils thoroughly enjoyed their trip to The Imperial War Museum in London.
- The school caters exceptionally well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils get on very well together. This could be clearly seen in lessons and throughout the day. They know right from wrong, are clear about the school's values such as high expectations and are kind and caring towards each other. They contribute well to the life of the school through, for example, making costumes for the school play and enjoy cultural events such as 'Art Week' and 'Book Week'. Through assemblies, such as those on Ramadan, they learn to respect and understand each other.
- Pupils learn about British values through their duties as school councillors, prefects and monitors, their study of British history and school rules. They have excellent preparation for life in modern Britain through the strong emphasis on tolerance and respect for different faiths and cultures within the school community. The school expects that all pupils will work together harmoniously.
- Parents who responded to Parent view or who returned written responses were positive about the school. Parents spoken to by inspectors were very happy with the school and their children's enjoyment of it.
- The local authority provides a small measure of support to the school due to its effectiveness.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are robust. They are rigorously implemented, ensuring the safety of the pupils and staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide effective support and challenge to the school. They fulfil their statutory and other

duties well through their clear and detailed termly action plan. They particularly enjoy the opportunities they get to celebrate and reward pupils for their successes. They know how effective teaching is because they get termly reports from the headteacher and they come into school to check for themselves. They are clear about the attainment and progress of pupils as they check the published data and get termly updates from the deputy headteacher. They are fully involved in setting targets for the headteacher and know there is a similar process in place for all staff. They know that sanctions apply for those who do not meet their targets. All pay increases have to be approved by the finance committee.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that is on offer in the school and consequently have very positive attitudes to their learning. They respond with excellent conduct and very good manners to the school's high expectations.
- The school has excellent systems for monitoring behaviour and pupils respond extremely well to these. They particularly like the house points system that rewards their good behaviour.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes were clearly shown as Year 6 pupils prepared for their end-of-year performance of *'The Little Mermaid'*. They were highly motivated, participated fully and showed high levels of commitment to improving their performance.
- The school creates a very positive place for pupils to learn that fully engages them in all that is on offer. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and unanimously positive about their learning. They say that there are rarely any incidents of poor behaviour and these are linked to pupils with identified behaviour problems.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities around the school such as monitors, school councillors and prefects. They fulfil these roles conscientiously.
- The school has worked very hard and successfully to improve attendance, which is now broadly in line with the national average. Most of the issues with attendance relate to a small number of pupils with severe problems. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school and are keen to attend.
- Pupils enjoy breakfast club as they have a hearty breakfast and enjoy activities, including physical pursuits. This prepares them well for school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils learn about the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying, through assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons. They say that bullying of any kind is very rare and dealt with very effectively by staff when it does occur.
- The school provides a safe environment for pupils. This ensures pupils feel very safe in lessons and around the school. They are confident that staff will take very good care of them and support them where needed.
- The school has a very clear policy for e-safety and pupils are very aware of the need to be safe when using the internet.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of staying safe through adopting a healthy lifestyle, staying safe in the sun and safe use of apparatus in physical education lessons. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have cycling training. All pupils learn to use the school's go-karts safely. They are issued with a driving licence that can be taken away if they do not use them sensibly.
- The school takes excellent care of its vulnerable pupils, ensuring their needs are very well met through the outstanding provision set up by the special educational needs leader and the successful support of external agencies.
- Parents are unanimously positive about behaviour and safety in the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching over time ensures pupils learn well.
- Teachers plan and organise interesting lessons that engage pupils fully in their learning. Pupils say that lessons are fun and teachers make sure they are clear about what they have to learn.
- Staff question pupils effectively and have good subject knowledge that they use well to develop pupils'

knowledge and skills.

- Teachers make good use of subject-specific vocabulary, such as ‘alliteration’ and ‘suffixes’ in English and ‘doubling’ and ‘inverse numbers’ in mathematics, to develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding.
- Excellent relationships at all levels support pupils extremely well in motivating them to learn and in giving them the confidence to persevere with their work. Staff make effective use of a ‘buddy’ system to enable pupils to share their learning.
- Well-trained teaching assistants make an effective contribution to learning, particularly for those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English. They provide well-targeted support and effective questioning that engage and motivate pupils to learn new skills.
- Staff work hard to improve pupils’ wider skills. For example, in Year 6, the end-of-year performance provides opportunities for pupils to develop their communication skills and work productively together. Additionally, a group of pupils are responsible for designing props that ‘reflect a scene or character’ and there is a ‘costumes group’ responsible for making costumes.
- Teachers provide well for the most-able pupils through work that challenges them in class and extension activities to move their learning on quickly. They also take on the role of ‘expert’ in some learning situations.
- Regular reading sessions, as well as a range of other activities, such as reading challenges and individual support for those who are struggling, enable pupils to read successfully and with enjoyment.
- Teachers have done much to improve pupils’ writing with specific writing tasks that are used to set targets for improvement and the use of talk to stimulate writing. They provide pupils with regular feedback on their work and give them time to correct it, which helps to improve it further. This is accelerating pupils’ progress in writing, with much good writing seen in books. There are also boy-friendly topics to engage boys in their writing. However, boys’ writing still lags behind. Additionally, teachers acknowledge that there is still more work to do to improve pupils’ spelling.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure pupils develop their calculation skills through a range of well-targeted practical activities. Pupils not doing well enough get extra support to help them catch up. For example, in Year 5, excellent teaching helped pupils to make rapid progress in developing their understanding of prime numbers. However, occasionally, teachers’ feedback in mathematics is not regular enough or specific enough to move pupils’ learning on quickly, and this slows overall progress.
- Pupils’ homework is linked well to their topic work. They research at home and make or write about what interests them. For example, pupils made a model of a sarcophagus for an Ancient Egyptian and wrote about a visit to ‘The Mary Rose’.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well across the school given starting points below what is typically found for their age.
- The attainment and progress of pupils in Year 6 in 2014 was broadly as expected in reading and mathematics, and below in writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Boys in particular did not do well in writing. There is an improving picture overall this year in terms of pupils’ progress, including in writing, although attainment in writing still lags behind.
- Pupils in Year 2 achieve well so that their attainment over time and currently is broadly as expected.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs achieve well due to the excellent leadership of the special educational needs coordinator, who ensures a thorough assessment of their needs, effective deployment of resources to meet them and effective use of outside agencies where needed.
- The most-able pupils achieve well due to work in lessons that challenges them. Additional specialist teaching enables pupils in Year 6 to work at the higher Level 6 (the normal level for a 14-year-old) in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils at an early stage of learning English achieve well. Leaders arrange high-quality support and guidance from external agencies and provide effective support within the school.
- The school has an above-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils. Their attainment in Year 6 in 2014 was two terms behind other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics, and one term behind in reading. Their attainment was similar to other pupils in the school in writing and mathematics, and one term behind in reading. Their attainment and progress is currently similar to other pupils in the school. The school has successfully closed the gaps between them and other pupils.
- Pupils achieve well, and occasionally outstandingly well, in their reading because of the good emphasis placed on it by the school both in group reading and in literacy lessons. The school has improved its

provision for phonics (the sounds that letters make) and consequently is on track for pupils in Year 1 to be closer to the national picture in the phonics screening check this year.

- Achievement in writing has been weaker and the school has put much in place to secure improvement. A combination of phonics teaching, opportunities to write at length and effective feedback makes sure pupils' achievement is mainly good. However, boys do not do as well as girls in spite of the school's many initiatives. This is partly because senior staff are not always precise enough in setting clear and specific goals to ensure boys keep up.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. The school has put much in place to secure a consistently improving picture including additional support for the least able and challenge for the most able. However, occasionally, teachers' feedback is not regular enough or precise enough to move pupils' learning on quickly.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children's achievement is outstanding. They make rapid progress across all the areas of learning in both the Nursery and Reception classes. By the end of Reception, the proportion who achieve a good level of development exceeds the national level. This ensures they are very well prepared for their start in Year 1.
- The early years is very well resourced with high levels of adult support. All adults know the children extremely well. Through their effective conversations and questioning, they challenge the children fully and move their learning on quickly. Teaching is outstanding.
- Effective teaching of phonics enables children to use these skills well in their reading and writing.
- Children have excellent attitudes to their learning. Relationships at all levels are excellent and this ensures outstanding behaviour and enjoyment of all that is on offer. Children clearly enjoy their learning and are eager to please.
- Staff make sure they keep the children safe. Children are frequently reminded of the rules, which they follow very well. Children receive very effective support from a well-trained staff who know them extremely well. They ensure learning takes place in a pleasant, safe and well-resourced learning environment.
- Staff work very well with parents. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's 'learning journey', attend all celebrations and accompany children on their many trips.
- Planning and assessment are rigorous and this underpins children's excellent progress.
- Outstanding leadership of the early years, that focuses on high achievement and excellent provision, makes a significant contribution to the children's rapid progress across all the areas of learning.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	140009
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	447808

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	580
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charlotte Hetherington
Headteacher	Karen Stocks
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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