

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



26 January 2018

Mrs J Collier  
Headteacher  
Sampford Arundel Community Primary School  
Sampford Arundel  
Wellington  
Somerset  
TA21 9QN

Dear Mrs Collier

### **Short inspection of Sampford Arundel Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in July 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Since the last inspection, the school has consistently delivered strong key stage 1 outcomes. However, the progress that pupils make in key stage 2 has been low for the past three years. Leaders have recognised the need to improve outcomes for pupils and have acted, with external support, to bring about positive changes. Leaders have ensured that assessments are accurate across the school and, by working with the local authority, added much needed direction. Many of the initiatives to improve teaching, learning and assessment across the school are still in their infancy. As a result, it has not been possible to see what impact they are having on pupils' outcomes through the inspection findings.

There have been changes in the governing body, including a new chair of governors and vice chair of governors. Both of these governors acknowledge the improvements needed and have demonstrated their ability to hold leaders to account. Governors ask increasingly challenging questions about pupils' low outcomes, leading to a change in how interventions have been used to support pupils in upper key stage 2.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the lines of enquiry to consider during the day. These included considering how the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in key stage 2 ensures strong progress in mathematics. Second, I

explored how pupils were prepared for the raised expectations in writing as they start key stage 2. I also considered how leaders have designed and delivered a reading curriculum which allows pupils to make progress from their strong starting points in Reception and key stage 1.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders carry out robust employment checks which ensure that the school only appoints staff who are suitable to work with children. Leaders who are trained in safer recruitment feature on the interview panel for prospective appointments. Once employed, staff have access to an induction programme which familiarises them with the school's child protection policy and keeping children safe in education. Leaders ensure that staff are updated annually to reaffirm the school's procedures and approach to safeguarding children.

Leaders keep ongoing records of concerns about pupils that are well organised and updated frequently. When these concerns warrant external support, leaders ensure that referrals are swift and effective. Leaders work with families effectively when making any referrals and support the families well. As a result, referrals are detailed and result in positive outcomes for pupils. Leaders can demonstrate where improvements have been made to enhance safeguarding further following completion of the local authority's safeguarding audit. However, the school has not completed the recommendations from the most recent local authority safeguarding audit.

Looking ahead, leaders acknowledge the need to tighten up the administration of safeguarding in the school; in particular, the organisation of staff files and the single central record. Despite these recommendations, it is clear that safeguarding is effective.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have introduced a relatively new approach to teaching mathematics across the school which has led to greater consistency. Teachers take account of the mixed-age setting and make attempts to teach pupils according to their age and ability. Progress is evident in books, particularly for lower-attaining pupils. Workbooks show how teachers tailor activities to meet their emerging needs which are matched well to their ability. Consequently, lower-attaining pupils find this work challenging yet achievable, and progress is clear. However, the work is not sufficiently challenging for pupils who are working at or above expectations for their age.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop fluency when working with numbers, but pupils rarely develop their reasoning or problem-solving skills. In some cases, pupils are expected to answer a large number of questions which result in them making basic errors, particularly when the work is not challenging and pupils become distracted. As a result, some pupils find this work too easy and progress stalls.
- Teaching does not yet fully consider pupils' prior knowledge in mathematics when

planning sequences of lessons. It is not always clear how pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding lesson by lesson. The range of mathematical areas taught in these lessons makes it difficult for adults to check on pupils' progress. Consequently, some pupils' progress goes unnoticed and further support or challenge is delayed. In some cases, pupils make mistakes which they repeat over a series of lessons.

- Leaders have acted quickly to make sure that writing assessments are accurate. They have worked well with local schools to compare work samples and discuss next steps. As a result, teachers assess writing accurately and know the next steps needed to help pupils improve. In key stage 1, the proportion of pupils working at expectations for their age is above the national average. This is the result of high-quality writing opportunities across a range of genres. However, teaching does not consistently use information about what pupils can already do and lacks the precision required to promote strong progress and improved outcomes by the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders have introduced a new approach to teaching writing which has ensured greater consistency. Although some positive outcomes are emerging across the school, this work is still in its infancy. Where grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught to support writing, this does not yet meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, pupils either find the work too easy or too hard. Leaders acknowledge the need to further improve how writing is taught, including greater precision in providing writing activities based on secure assessment.
- Reading across the school was my final line of enquiry. It is clear that pupils in Reception and key stage 1 receive high-quality teaching in reading. Pupils read daily and regularly share a book with an adult, both with teachers at school and family at home. Teachers plan high-quality daily phonics sessions which take account of pupils' phonics knowledge. Leaders track progress closely and reading books are carefully chosen to align closely with the sounds they are learning in class and provide opportunities for pupils to decode words successfully. As a result, the proportion of pupils meeting the standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has been above the national average for the past three years. Furthermore, pupils leave key stage 1 well prepared for life in key stage 2.
- In recent years, progress in reading in key stage 2 has been low and leaders have acted to improve outcomes for pupils. Pupils in key stage 2 have regular opportunities to read, as well as to develop their understanding about what they have read. However, these opportunities lack the precision required to improve progress for pupils. This is most noticeable for pupils who are working in groups without support from an adult. The activities provided do not challenge pupils and progress during these lessons remains unnoticed.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the approach to teaching writing is embedded, so that it takes account of what pupils can already do and assessment information is used to plan subsequent learning
- pupils working at age-related expectations and higher standards in mathematics are challenged by providing regular opportunities to reason and problem solve, resulting in improved progress across key stage 2
- the teaching of reading develops comprehension skills for all pupils, so that they make strong progress and more work at age-related expectations by the end of Year 6.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nathan Kemp  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I spoke to you and the senior teacher. I also spoke to two representatives of the governing body and an external adviser from the local authority. You accompanied me as I made visits to lessons to observe pupils. We also scrutinised the work in pupils' books.

I looked at a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation and the current school development plan, as well as progress and assessment information. Additionally, I scrutinised various safeguarding records, including those relating to the suitability of staff to work with children and training opportunities for staff. I also met with the designated safeguarding leader.

I took account of the 28 responses to the Parent View online survey and the 10 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.