

Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary School

Bradstocks Way, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4DA

Inspection dates 14–15 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school. It is not outstanding because

- The Nursery classroom is becoming shabby; the resources are not sufficiently stimulating for the children. The teaching in the Nursery also requires improvement because although it is caring and conscientious it is not sufficiently vibrant to help children make the really rapid gains in their learning needed as many enter with low skill levels including in their speech.
- In Years 1 to 6 lessons pupils are not quite independent enough in their learning. They are not always given opportunities to think for themselves and to make decisions..
- Pupils' increasing self-belief and particular talents have yet to be fully acknowledged and extended consistently by all teachers; occasionally they still over-direct their pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is an outstanding leader. She is determined and has successfully helped staff to raise the pupils' achievement in all subjects.
- Families are becoming more involved in their children's learning. The recent parental survey rightly shows a strong confidence in all aspects of the school.
- The curriculum is rich and involves a lot of interesting topics that grab the pupils' interest.
- Reception children make rapid progress because of outstanding teaching. In Years 1 to 6 teaching is almost all good.
- Reading standards are impressive: almost half of Year 6 obtained Level 5 in 2012; and Year 1 were above the standard expected in their national phonics (letters and sounds) assessment.
- Governors offer the school strong and effective support and challenge.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with staff, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and the chair of the achievement committee. She met with both the past and present local authority support officers and the lead officer from an Achievement for All programme sponsored by the Department for Education – this supports the potentially most vulnerable pupils in the school.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including: the school development plan; the school's data for tracking pupils' progress; the governing body minutes; the work in pupils' books and some work they selected to share; 'learning journey diaries' from the Nursery and Reception class; and the school's safeguarding documentation.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in eight lessons, four part lessons and in two special groups supporting pupils who find mathematics difficult.
- Two joint observations were conducted with the headteacher and she was observed giving feedback on the quality of learning and teaching.
- The inspector also spoke to teaching assistants and took into account 66 responses from the recent survey of parents and carers. The survey used a printed version of the online questions on Ofsted's Parent View website. Eighteen questionnaire responses from staff were also considered.

Inspection Team

Lead inspector, Mo Roberts HMI

Full report

Information about this school

- This smaller-than-average sized primary school has more pupils than at the last inspection.
- An above-average number of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in military families.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs at school action is above the national average.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The majority of the pupils are White British.
- Pupils attend part-time in the Nursery. These 17 children are included in the school roll.
- In 2012 the school exceeded the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There has been a substantial change in teaching staff since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Create a more vibrant Nursery environment by:
 - removing worn resources and ensuring new ones are well matched to the specific needs of the children
 - developing nursery teaching by adopting a wider range of strategies to involve children in their directly taught, short, focused sessions, for example, by the use of puppets and items like magnifying glasses linked to the computer.
- Consolidate the good teaching across all classes and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by
 - eradicating the tendency of some teachers to over direct their pupils
 - further developing pupils' independence and critical thinking skills
 - revising the gifted and talented register to ensure pupils with specific talents are fully identified and that this information is well used to promote pupils' success in all the classes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils leave the school in Year 6 they now achieve good standards in reading and writing, and are only just below national expectations in mathematics.
- Attainment of pupils currently in the school shows they are in line with national expectations and the attainment in mathematics is improving because of intensive high-quality extra support for those in danger of falling behind.
- Pupils excel in their reading, with almost half of the larger group leaving in 2012 having reached the higher level (Level 5).
- In the 2012 national tests all pupils reached at least the nationally expected level in writing. Given their low starting points on entry this shows real determination and achievement.
- When children enter the school in the Nursery or Reception class they often have skills and abilities at levels below or well below those expected for their age. They tend to make steady progress in the Nursery and rapid progress in the Reception class. They continue to make fast progress in their understanding, especially of letters and sounds, in Year 1.
- The amount of progress pupils make in Years 2 to 6 is now consistently good. This includes the progress of those supported by the pupil premium and those with special educational needs. Progress is also good or exceptional for the few pupils learning English as an additional language.
- Pupils are now given enough time to respond to the advice given in teachers' marking. This is an improvement since the last inspection; feedback is simple and clear and well linked to the learning pupils are expected to make. Pupils understand the advice given.
- Pupils achieve much more now across both academic and non-academic areas due to the increased breadth of the curriculum. They are very proud of their school.
- The trends of pupil achievement over the years are affected by some very small year groups. In 2011 there were only five pupils that had been in the school for a sustained period taking the national tests, so the apparent dip in performance statistics was due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this small group.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is now more consistently good and it is leading to more rapid pupil progress. Just the odd lesson for pupils of statutory age still needs developing further.
- Planning and assessment are well focused in all classes. The pace is good almost all of the time and pupils are active and engaged learners, especially when compared to their performance during the last inspection. Occasionally teachers' explanations are still a little too long and the concentration of the less able pupils waivers.
- Teachers can now risk giving pupils more opportunities to make decisions and devise some more tasks which are open ended, so that pupils are able to fully demonstrate their skills and talents.
- The school employed additional teaching staff with the pupil premium money, and created single year groups in Key Stage 1. This is helping raise the current pupils' attainment.
- The school also has effective small-group support for those pupils who would benefit from targeted help to reach their full potential. This includes a group of potentially able writers striving to reach the higher levels in their writing.
- Inspirational teaching in the Reception class makes children believe in what they can learn and accomplish. The class teacher is also the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and is helping develop the nursery teaching by supporting good quality assessment of the children's progress across both the classes.
- There is more to be done in modernising the nursery facilities and resources and developing the

vibrancy of the teaching in the Nursery sessions. Children in the Nursery are well cared for, safe and settled. They enjoy participating in the well-established routines and their free learning through play. Those with special educational needs in early language development are particularly well supported by enrichment activities led by the nursery nurse.

- The school's work with parents and carers on 'how pupils learn mathematics' is beginning to pay dividends as pupils show more confidence in the subject. Expert support through the 'catch up' programme and the one-to-one tuition is carefully evaluated and demonstrates some really rapid progress for the weakest young mathematicians.
- The gaps in mathematics are narrowing but it was noticeable that more work on multiplication tables is needed across Key Stage 2; the pupils' hesitancy in recalling them reduces their ability to tackle word problems or fractions with confidence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are confident, safe and happy in school and their behaviour is good throughout the day. They concentrate exceptionally well in assembly and enjoy seeing each other take the lead. They say teachers all have similar expectations for good behaviour and rarely need to use the agreed sanctions for misbehaviour.
- Any quarrels are minor and pupils are confident that if bullying occurred they would quickly get help from adults to sort it out. They are aware of cyber-bullying and know how to keep safe on the internet.
- There have been no exclusions in recent years and attendance is up as the school does not allow holidays in term-time.
- Kindness and fair turn-taking are clearly evident and pupils follow through from the strong moral teaching they receive. They view others with respect and are quick to help new arrivals to settle in and feel part of the happy atmosphere.
- Behaviour in the dining room and at break times is exemplary and pupils are considerate; for example, they got through their dinner promptly so the hall could be used for a choir practice.
- When in class pupils work well in pairs and small groups. They are keen to include everyone and readily pay attention when asked. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and integrated into all aspects of school life.
- The reason that behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding is because older pupils especially do not have enough opportunity to take a greater responsibility and control over their own learning. They do however undertake a good deal of responsibility around the school.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good and have had a big impact on driving improvement. While initially the headteacher had to provide most of the challenge to raise aspirations, she is now ably assisted by a small senior management team. Middle leaders are monitoring their subjects effectively and there is a strong ethos of professional development across the school.
- The local authority supports the school well. They, together with the headteacher, have helped to support staff to improve both teaching and the results achieved by the pupils. The local authority has now reduced its support as the school is demonstrating a strong capacity to continue to improve on its own.
- The rich developments in the quality and diversity of the curriculum are a good example of the impact that the new staff team has achieved. These range from successful mathematics and book weeks to a splendid, and largely pupil devised, royal wedding re-enactment in the local church -this was filmed for the BBC Newsround programme. Pupils also benefit from more music

teaching and the headteacher leads a choir that participates in national events..

- The school's weaknesses have been systematically eradicated so pupils are fully engaged in their lessons and more readily use correct scientific vocabulary. Years 5 and 6 thoroughly enjoyed their science lesson and the linked workshop on the 'potions and substances' held during the inspection.
 - Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is rigorous and accurate and leads to continued improvement. The teachers know the school's strengths and weaknesses and their self-evaluation is reflective and purposeful.
 - The school's tracking data are now well used by all teachers to help them pinpoint where pupils require extra help. Teachers are held accountable for the progress of their pupils by fair but demanding performance management and regular meetings to review their pupils' progress.
 - The school works well in partnership with other agencies, for example the speech therapy service, and has maintained high-quality safeguarding processes and ensured even the most potentially vulnerable are safe.
 - The pupils are given excellent spiritual, moral and social guidance and their experience of the diverse cultures in Britain is developing well. They are more aware of aspects of their own culture such as music and singing and have embraced learning to speak French.
 - The school has a fully inclusive approach and takes care that pupils having extra help do not miss out on the same lessons each week. Teaching assistants are very adept and tactful in their support of disabled pupils.
 - All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.
 - Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because the work on 'closing the gap' in pupils' attainment between the highest and lowest in mathematics is ongoing and there is still room to develop teaching and learning to ensure good progress right from the start of pupils' education.
 - **Governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very committed to seeing the school improve and offers good levels of support and challenge. Governors are regularly in school following up on lines of enquiry and celebrating the numerous successes pupils achieve.
 - They are well organised with very effective committees and clear minutes showing their deliberations. They are strategic thinking and effectively hold the school to account. Decisions about spending priorities, performance management and staff development are well considered, as are those ensuring pupils' safety and moral welfare.
 - Governors are supportive of efforts to move teaching and learning to the highest category and show determination to support staff so they can ensure every child achieves their full potential.
 - They are however currently short of two parent/carers governors.
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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	123162
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	402142

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Helen Kendrick
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Ashcroft
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 June 2010
Telephone number	01235 848333
Email address	office.3243@ocnmail.net

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