

# Sherborne St John Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Basingstoke RG24 9HT

**Inspection dates** 5–6 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- Teaching and learning are good. Stimulating and challenging lessons that interest pupils ensure they learn well.
- Effective support from well-trained additional staff, who take pupils for small group and individual work, contribute well to pupils' overall good learning.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average and the vast majority of pupils make good progress, given their starting points.
- Strong, effective leadership from leaders and governors has maintained good quality teaching that has resulted in improvements, particularly in writing, since the previous inspection.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and say that lessons are fun. Behaviour is good; pupils work well together on tasks and enjoy each other's company.
- The school is a caring, orderly community where pupils' welfare and enjoyment of their learning comes first. Consequently, pupils feel safe and secure.
- Exciting projects such as those on the Victorians and the Second World War engage pupils' interest and provide opportunities for visits and visitors that enhance their knowledge and understanding.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in mathematics is uneven and not yet consistently good. A lack of clear targets and effective marking and feedback slows pupils' progress in this subject.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, provision for activities that children choose for themselves is not sufficiently well planned to stimulate or challenge them, and this slows their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of other short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, the leadership team and other senior staff. A meeting was held with a local authority officer.
- The inspector took account of the 46 responses to the online Parent View survey and the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector listened to pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 read.

## Inspection team

Janet Sinclair, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Sherborne St John is a below average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action and school action plus is below average. There are no disabled pupils or pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. None is at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is extra money given to schools by the government to support, amongst others, pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has four mixed-age classes. These are the Reception and Year 1, Year 1 and 2, Year 3 and 4, and Year 5 and 6. The class teacher of Reception Year and Year 1 was on leave of absence during the inspection. The class was being taught by two part-time teachers.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to increase pupils rates of progress in mathematics by:
  - ensuring pupils have clear targets for their learning
  - using marking and oral feedback to involve pupils in correcting and improving their own work.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children are always interested and involved, by planning activities that challenge them to explore and learn for themselves.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and have been over time, particularly in English. Pupils make good progress in English across the school, given their starting points. Progress in mathematics is more uneven. Small-group support and extension activities for those who need it ensure good progress overall.
- Children start school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age and sometimes better, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Over time, children have made good progress across all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have limited opportunities to choose activities for themselves and develop the skills of learning for themselves.
- Pupils with special educational needs and the very few who are supported by the pupil premium make similar progress to that of their peers. Careful tracking of their progress and effective use of small-group work and individual support where needed is ensuring these pupils learn well.
- The school has put a great deal of effort into improving writing and has been successful, with a good proportion working at higher levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 than was previously the case. Regular extended writing that is carefully marked and clear and specific next steps that are shared with pupils are ensuring good progress. Additionally, good opportunities for writing across the curriculum, such as writing about the Great Fire of London in the Year 1 and 2 class and about life as a pirate in the Year 3 and 4 class, stimulate pupils' enjoyment and engagement.
- In mathematics, although pupils make good progress, it is not quite as strong as it is in English. Pupils' progress is hampered because they do not have clear targets for improvement. Marking and oral feedback do not fully involve pupils in making their work better.
- A good emphasis on sounds and letters work in Reception and Key Stage 1 enables pupils to use this knowledge well when reading unfamiliar words in their reading books, as demonstrated by pupils in all year groups who read to the inspector. Additionally, regular opportunities for reading in class where reading skills are developed and progress checked ensure pupils make good and sometimes excellent progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and occasionally of high quality. Lessons are well planned, have a clear structure and interesting content and challenge pupils well. Teachers question pupils effectively to develop their knowledge and understanding and ensure lessons have a good pace. This ensures that pupils are highly motivated and fully engaged in their learning.
- Teachers organise exciting, well-researched events such as the Victorian day in the Year 3 and 4 class that gave pupils a strong sense of history. Pupils spoken to said, 'We really got to know what it was like – it was scary.'
- Teachers provide good opportunities for writing. For example, pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class wrote newspaper reports for 'The Dunkirk Daily' as part of their work on the Second World War. They also did a great deal of research and learned a lot about the events and conditions that shaped people's lives at that time. Pupils spoken to said that it was an amazing project.
- Learning support partners provide good support for small groups and individuals including those with special educational needs and for whom the pupil premium applies. For example, small-group support for mathematics challenges pupils and gives them opportunities to ask questions that develop their understanding.
- Teachers mark work effectively in writing and set clear and specific targets that help pupils to improve their work.
- Although mathematics is well taught, including good opportunities for problem solving, a lack of clear targets for improvement and limited feedback or opportunities to make corrections slows

pupils' overall progress.

- Good relationships and a well-organised learning environment ensures that children of Reception age engage well in teacher-led activity and learn well. For example, the teacher made good use of a range of resources and clear articulation when helping children to spell simple words such as 'chip' and 'chin'. However, planned provision for activities that children undertake by themselves, both indoors and outside, is limited. Activities are not always sufficiently challenging or exciting to enable children to make good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils know the expectations for their behaviour and are fully aware of the sanctions that apply should they misbehave. None of them like the punishment of losing their playtime.
- Behaviour over time is good. Last year there were a small number of pupils who found it hard to behave well who were well managed by staff so that any disruption was kept to a minimum. Policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are in place and consistently applied.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying – only minor misdemeanours when occasionally pupils get stressed. They say that the anti-bullying week and talks that they get help them to be aware of what constitutes bullying. They praise the school council for organising the 'Buddy Bus Stop' and helping to sort out any playtime problems.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and work well together. They say that teachers make lessons fun and help them to learn in different ways and they cited the example of getting a letter from 'Captain Symmetry' asking them to make a flag with symmetrical patterns.
- Attendance is high and there have been no exclusions. Pupils are very happy to come to school.
- The school provides a safe environment for the pupils in their care. Pupils say that they feel safe and that staff take good care of them. They know how to stay safe, including using the internet safely and through their road safety and cycling proficiency training.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online Parent View survey consider that their children are safe in school. There were a small minority of parents who expressed some concerns about behaviour but the inspector could find no evidence to support these, only good behaviour that was well managed.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The good provision from the previous inspection has been maintained, teaching is strong and there are robust systems in place for ensuring that pupils make good progress. The school is fully aware that some aspects of mathematics need further development and has already begun to address this. This demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement.
- Senior staff check the quality of teaching and learning effectively. The process of setting targets for teachers allows them to focus on individual points for development as well as whole-school priorities. This has ensured that all staff contribute well to the school's continuing improvement.
- The school improvement plan is a useful tool that guides key developments. These are monitored carefully by senior staff and governors to ensure that progress towards them are made and improvement takes place.
- Robust tracking of pupils' progress and support for those falling behind ensure that there are few gaps in the performance of different groups. This ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils, regardless of their abilities and backgrounds, and that there is no discrimination.
- The school receives light touch support from the local authority due to its good outcomes.
- The curriculum is well planned and ensures the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. Good use is made of topics that enable good links between subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through music, for example, such as the drumming in the Year 5 and 6 class and performances such as the

delightful nativity play that pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 are preparing for their parents.

- Although most parents who responded to the online Parent View survey were positive about the school and what it provides, a small minority were unhappy with several aspects. The school works hard to involve parents through workshops, parents' evenings to discuss their children's progress, a swift response to parental concerns and informative reports on pupils' progress. The inspector could find no evidence to support their concerns.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They carefully monitor the school's finances, including the use of the pupil premium funding, ensuring that it is used wisely to benefit pupils by providing additional hours for support staff so that pupils make the best possible progress. The members of the governing body are developing skills in asking searching questions so that they understand the school's work, including the progress pupils make and the quality of teaching. They understand and monitor the process of setting targets for staff and how this links to increases in salary. They ensure that pupils and staff are kept safe through effective safeguarding procedures.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116315
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403295

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	111
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Roger Walters
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Payne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 October 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01256 850180
<b>Fax number</b>	01256 850180
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