

Colebrook Infant Academy

Towcester Road, Stratton Saint Margaret, Swindon, SN3 4AS

Inspection dates

14–15 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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

- Children make good progress from the moment they enter the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides them with a good start and they quickly develop the skills they need, including in literacy and numeracy, as well as gaining an appetite for learning.
- Pupils continue to achieve well through Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. The strong work the school does to support those facing barriers to learning ensures the achievement of all pupils, including those who receive the pupil premium, is good.
- Well-planned teaching provides lessons that are interesting, purposeful and that pupils enjoy. Marking provides pupils with clear indications of how to improve their work.
- Behaviour is good and pupils relate very well to one another and to adults. The school is a happy, calm and orderly environment and parents and pupils agree that Colebrook offers their children a safe place to grow and learn.
- The headteacher works in close collaboration with all staff to meet the priorities in the improvement plan and to promote high quality education. Rigorous checks are made on teachers and pupils, especially through thorough analysis of assessment results. This gives leaders and managers a precise picture of the school and enables the appropriate extra help to be given to pupils who need it.
- The governing body makes regular, careful checks on the school and is aware of Colebrook's strengths and areas for development. It is well placed to provide strong support and challenge to school leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, the pace in some lessons is not brisk enough to promote good learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons taught by seven teachers and undertook four joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, parents and carers, representatives of the governing body and a local authority officer.
- The inspector examined numerous school documents, including policies, assessment information, planning documents and records of all kinds.
- The views of 26 parents were analysed through the Parent View website.

Inspection team

John Carnaghan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized infant school. It converted to become an academy school in November 2011. When its predecessor school, Colebrook Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged as good overall.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is below the national average.
- Almost one fifth of pupils are from a minority ethnic background, predominantly from Asian backgrounds. About one tenth of pupils do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is close to the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure a higher proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - promoting a consistently brisk pace to lessons by setting clear deadlines for pupils to finish their tasks.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Staff responsible for the Early Years Foundation Stage have very close links with pre-school settings so that children's characteristics and needs are well known from the moment they enter the school. Activities are very carefully planned and well organised in a supportive environment and children typically make good progress in the Reception classes.
- Children quickly develop important skills like understanding numbers and the ability to sound out letters to help them recognise words. For example, a group of Reception class children who started a lesson working on 'ch' sounds ended it by reading and writing simple sentences. Good progress at this stage, including the development of very good learning habits, means children are fully equipped to tackle the National Curriculum as they move into Year 1.
- Good teaching provides interesting, enjoyable lessons that promote good learning throughout Key Stage 1. Pupils are very keen to learn; their books indicate that they do a great deal of work and make tangible progress in all of their subjects. This is promoted because most take careful heed of their teachers' advice in their quest to improve. The most able usually benefit from more challenging activities and this ensures that they achieve well
- Pupils' attainment levels at the end of Year 2 are consistently above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Given that children enter school with attainment that is generally similar to what is expected for their age, this represents good achievement for all groups of pupils over their three years at Colebrook.
- Regular reading opportunities in an environment that is rich in books and the printed word ensure that pupils develop above average reading skills. They have good strategies to help them read new words; they read books with confidence and happily talk about what they have read.
- All pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. Careful assessment gives the school precise information about the challenges facing pupils, such as those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. Effective planning, tailored to each pupil's needs, ensures skilled assistance is readily available for all groups. Well-qualified and committed teaching assistants provide strong support and ensure the school is fully inclusive. The achievement of these pupils is also good, mirroring that of others in the school.
- The needs of pupils in receipt of additional funding (the pupil premium) are well known to the school and additional help is planned to meet each individual's needs. Very careful checks are made on the progress of each of these pupils through regular reviews, and adjustments are made as required. This very strong support means that the gaps between this group of pupils and others in the school have steadily closed over the last two years. In 2013, the few Year 2 pupils in this category were approximately one term behind their peers in writing and mathematics and two terms behind in reading. Current pupil premium recipients in Year 2 are on target to reduce this gap in 2014.

The quality of teaching is good

- Staff plan lessons carefully to offer interesting learning experiences. Pupils say lessons are fun and react accordingly, showing a positive approach to their work. Teachers and pupils share a love of learning and this creates an enthusiastic atmosphere in lessons; teachers have high expectations and, most of the time, pupils strive to meet them. This promotes good progress.
- Most lessons offer varied activities and this helps pupils maintain their concentration and energy. Teachers question pupils perceptively to check on their developing understanding; teachers are flexible in adapting what they are doing during lessons, so they move on quickly where pupils quickly grasp ideas or slow down and recap when pupils appear puzzled.
- Good preparation and planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that children benefit from a wide variety of activities that are both teacher led and initiated by children and happen

both indoors and out. Record keeping is thorough so all adults are aware of individual children's aptitudes and how best to work with them. Staff promote literacy and numeracy skills thoroughly with particularly challenging teacher-led sessions in these areas, promoting high standards in, for example, children's writing.

- Pupils' work is thoroughly marked. Teachers usually offer helpful comments and set appropriate targets to help pupils improve their work. Pupils' workbooks are packed with work they have done, indicating a good pace of learning over time. They are also well presented because pupils heed teachers' friendly and supportive advice.
- Carefully maintained assessment records enable teachers to establish when and where pupils need additional help. Adults collaborate to select the best type of intervention for each individual. Skilled teaching assistants run many small group or individual sessions, the success of these is subject to regular checks and children are returned to class or given further help depending on the rate of their progress. This means that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are very well supported, to the benefit of their progress.
- A good Year 2 English lesson demonstrated many strengths. It was carefully planned to build on pupils' previous research. Careful questioning from the teacher enabled her to model how to sort information logically, so that pupils were well prepared and confident to organise their own set of information as they got ready to undertake an extended piece of writing.
- On rare occasions, teachers' introductions to lessons do not suit all pupils because they are aimed at the 'middle'. More able pupils and those who find learning difficult are not always fully catered for and their progress at this stage can slow down. Tasks pupils move on to are invariably better adapted to pupils' various aptitudes so all are kept at full stretch. While most lessons run briskly, teachers do not always set deadlines so their work pace as they undertake tasks can slow down as time passes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers model polite and considerate behaviour and pupils relate well to one another and with adults. They are invariably courteous, saying 'excuse me' as they squeeze past one another when in tight spaces.
- The school is an orderly and calm place to play and learn. Even in bad weather, when pupils have to stay indoors, they are sensible and cooperative. Almost all pupils enjoyed the morning break dance and exercise session in the hall run by teaching assistants when the playground was too icy to use.
- Pupils, parents and staff have no significant concerns about behaviour. Bullying is virtually unknown, but pupils are aware that any potential instances are quickly dealt with by staff. Pupils' appetite for learning means the pupils settle quickly to their work and lessons begin promptly. There is very little off-task chatter and disturbances to the smooth tenor of lessons are rare.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school is a secure environment and pupils are well supervised throughout the school day. Pupils have a good understanding of safety whilst using computers that is appropriate to their age. Visitors, such as local police officers, help pupils appreciate the potential dangers of the wider world such as on the busy local roads.
- Staff are well trained in all aspects of pupils' care and safety and are responsive to any issues that may arise. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The very positive relationships with parents, evident at the start and end of each day, and confirmed in parental questionnaires, provide a good basis for ensuring pupils' safety. Behaviour is good and not outstanding because although attendance is rising steadily it is broadly similar to the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The school makes regular checks on teaching and progress to help it improve. It holds a very clear picture of where each pupil stands academically and the rate of her or his progress.

Frequent review meetings ensure any weaknesses are quickly dealt with. These meetings are also used to hold class teachers to account for the quality of their teaching and how well their pupils are doing. These can trigger additional support and training opportunities to help staff improve their practice.

- The headteacher is a positive influence on the school and sets high expectations for pupils and staff. Her calm, confident and friendly personality has helped to create a relaxed, yet purposeful, ethos throughout the school.
- The headteacher has actively developed the responsibilities and capabilities of other school staff. Middle managers have a growing understanding of the school and are increasingly active in addressing the areas for development identified in the clear and well-judged school development plan. The local authority offers useful support when required to this stand-alone academy. The school has the capacity for continuing improvement.
- Performance management is well used to focus teachers' efforts effectively so that teachers all contribute to addressing the school's priorities for improvement. Teachers, at whatever stage of their career, feel well supported and empowered to have a positive influence on the school.
- The school plans its mixtures of studies and activities carefully to ensure that the interesting topics teachers cover, such as pirates, contribute fully to the progressive development of the skills pupils need, especially in literacy and numeracy. All staff contribute to discussions that evolve into an engaging variety of learning activities. Many firsthand experiences are offered; for example, pupils visited Windsor Castle and the local theatre. Visitors, such as parents with interesting jobs, offer further insights into the wider world.
- The new primary school sport funding is used effectively to provide regular specialist coaching for pupils and to increase opportunities for after-school sporting activities. This has had an impact on pupils' health and physical well-being; for example, the number of pupils attending the after-school sports club has risen sharply.
- Positive patterns of behaviour and highly constructive relationships are a good testament to pupils' strong moral and social development. The local church contributes to spiritual understanding and pupils are aware of non-Christian religious festivals such as Diwali. Assemblies offer themes to help pupils to reflect on important issues like friendship and consideration for others. History and religious education offer opportunities to understand other cultures, but pupils' first hand experiences are limited as the school does not have pupil links with other schools in different parts of the country or abroad.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors make regular visits to the school to check how well it is performing. They have close links with individual teachers and a good grasp of pupils' assessment information, so they know where Colebrook pupils' attainment stands in comparison with national averages. They show a good understanding of the qualities of teaching at the school and are aware how teachers' performance in the classroom is related to their pay progression. The governing body has a firm grasp on the school's financial management and members understand and approve of the allocation of pupil premium funds. Effective training, much provided by the local authority, keeps members of the governing body up to date with educational developments and ensures that they have the skills needed to both support and challenge the school. This has a positive impact on pupils' safety; well-informed governors help to ensure that the school fully meets safeguarding requirements.

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	137620
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	431484

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maggie Watts
Headteacher	Linda Rankin
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01793 331960
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