

Seend Church of England VA Primary School

School Road, Seend, Melksham, SN12 6NJ

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well in all year groups, including Reception. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Improvement in learning has risen in the last two years, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school, and is sometimes outstanding, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teachers relate very effectively to pupils, and have good subject knowledge and high expectations.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. They have enthusiastic attitudes to learning and show great care and respect for each other and adults.
- The school is led very effectively by a decisive and caring headteacher, who constantly encourages staff and pupils alike to do the best they can.
- The school is a happy and colourful place, where pupils' work is displayed for all to enjoy, and where they make excellent contributions to the school community and the wider world.
- The governing body is well led, and plays an active part in the drive for continual improvement. Governors work well with staff, and offer good support and challenge to leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The good progress that pupils have recently made has not yet been sustained consistently over time and has varied year-on-year in the past.
- Not enough teaching is consistently outstanding to enable pupils to reach high levels of attainment in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 13 lessons. Four of these were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and four governors. The inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- The inspector discussed teaching and pupils' progress with class teachers. Pupils' books and records of their progress were examined.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading and discussed their reading experiences with them. The inspector took account of 51 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents and carers. He also examined 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, safeguarding arrangements, school policies, and records of checks made by school leaders on the quality of teaching.

Inspection team

Rodney Braithwaite, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British, the remainder coming from a range of other ethnic heritages. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding provided for children in the care of the local authority, pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals in the last six years, and those who are members of families in the armed forces.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is organised into four mixed-aged classes.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has completed a major building extension. There have also been recent changes of teaching staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, especially in Key Stage 1, so that more pupils achieve exceptionally well, by making sure that they spend sufficient time practising and applying their skills.
- Ensure that more pupils than in the past reach standards above average or even higher in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start in the Reception class with skills and experiences typical for their age. However this does vary year-by-year with small numbers in each year group. Children are very eager to learn and make good progress in their speaking and mathematical skills, and in the development of independence and self-confidence.
- Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve well. Although pupils reach above average levels by the end of Year 2 in some years, this is not always consistent. In 2013 for example, few pupils reached above average levels in reading, writing or mathematics.
- Data and evidence of pupils' learning suggest that the number reaching higher levels in Key Stage 1 is rising. In 2013 a high proportion of pupils reached or exceeded the standard expected in the phonics check (letters and the sounds they make), which was well above average.
- Progress has varied in Years 3 to 6, but it is clear that it has become more consistent in the last 18 months. In 2013 pupils' standards were above average in reading and mathematics, average in writing and well above average in their knowledge of spellings and grammar.
- Although their achievement in all subjects was better than average with a significant proportion making good progress, very few attained standards well above average.
- The progress of pupils in these years continues to rise and there is strong evidence that this is now being sustained by improved teaching.
- Good and sometimes better achievement was observed a number of times and in a number of subjects during the inspection. For example, pupils worked very hard in Year 6 to understand how to add and subtract negative numbers; pupils developed very expressive group sequences of dance in the Years 3 and 4 class; and pupils from all years practised their singing skills beautifully and with enjoyment with a specialist teacher.
- All groups of pupils have made good progress in their learning since starting school and are achieving well. This includes the very small numbers of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language. More-able pupils are now being challenged more consistently at higher levels, leading to improving achievement.
- Similarly the very low number of pupils supported by the pupil premium are making good progress. In the 2013 tests at the end of Year 6, these pupils reached standards at least equal to those of other pupils in the school. They have benefited strongly from the effective use of the pupil premium funding directed to their specific needs.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers. They read regularly to adults. Reading skills have improved markedly and are benefiting from the skilled teaching of phonics in school, and much parental support. Almost all parents and carers feel their child makes good progress in school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved strongly over time and is now consistently good in all years. Frequently there is outstanding teaching in Years 3 to 6, leading to accelerated progress for these pupils.
- Evidence for this was seen widely in lessons, pupils' work in books, records of pupils' progress, and regular observations of teaching and learning by the headteacher.
- Throughout the school there are strong and mutually respectful relationships between staff and pupils. This enables pupils to become increasingly responsible, caring, and aware of what will be expected of them in the future.
- Rapid learning was observed during a debate by pupils in Years 5 and 6, when they argued about the pros and cons of global warming. The teacher and teaching assistant ensured that all pupils had an opportunity to express some very mature points of view. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 also rose well to the challenge of improving their grammar and use of adjectives in imaginative

'recount' stories. This demonstrated the high quality of pupils' speaking skills.

- Just occasionally in Years 1 and 2, teaching does not give pupils opportunities quickly enough to practise and apply the writing and mathematical skills they have been taught and this inhibits their achievement. Although their progress is nearly always good, it is not often outstanding.
- Under the expert guidance of the headteacher, the gathering and understanding of data showing pupils' progress have improved greatly, and teachers use this information effectively in their planning.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress because the teacher and teaching assistant carefully balance their support and guidance to the children, allowing them plenty of opportunities to make their own learning and personal choices. They are successfully learning to concentrate on their activities and work with each other, such as when they were seen measuring the sizes of books by counting the small blocks they were using.
- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of how to improve their learning, because they have consistent guidance from their teachers. They talk with enthusiasm about 'two stars and a wish' and the coloured marking of their work.
- Teachers and competent and caring teaching assistants work closely together. This enables pupils to make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic, very attentive at all times, and are always interested in the activities they take part in. They are especially good at working with each other in pairs as 'learning partners' and in larger groups.
- The behaviour of pupils in class is outstanding. This has strongly supported their improved progress in the last 18 months and their sustained interest in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils identify numerous learning activities they have enjoyed, talking excitedly about making waste models which are displayed around the school, residential trips, painting 'Tudor portraits' of themselves and acting their own play scripts.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and have great pride in its achievements. All the responses on Parent View indicated that parents and carers think the school manages behaviour well, and staff report no issues with pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils are particularly polite and respectful towards adults. The school has a considerable number of written comments from visitors to the school praising pupils' behaviour in school and at public events, one typically commenting, 'The children are a great credit to the school.'
- A feature of pupils' behaviour is their strong community spirit. Every day older pupils put the chairs away after lunch and willingly help supervisors to clean the tables. There is always a calm and friendly atmosphere during lunch, greatly enhanced by pupils sitting together on 'family' tables where the oldest help the youngest.
- During the inspection many pupils took part in a very enjoyable sponsored run around the large field in aid of Sport Relief. In addition at least one pupil made a 'sports' cake for the charity event. Pupils have a strong awareness of being ready for the challenges in their future lives.
- Children in the Reception class settle quickly into school routines and soon develop considerable self-confidence and show care and consideration towards each other in their activities.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have great confidence in the adults in school and appreciate that they are trusted to be responsible for their own actions. They have a thorough understanding of the school's high expectations of their behaviour. Parents and carers are unanimous in their view that their children are safe and well looked after.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, in particular through mobile phones or the internet, saying 'We have been shown videos about this.' They express no concerns about bullying, and could give no examples during conversations.
- Attendance has been good for some years and has been particularly high in this school year. New procedures for encouraging punctuality are proving successful. There have been no

exclusions for several years.

The leadership and management are good

- The creative and aspirational headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher, has led school improvement successfully since her appointment four years ago. She holds many responsibilities in this small school, and has very effectively managed several important staff changes. As a result, pupils' progress is rising quickly throughout the school and the quality of teaching continues to rise.
- The headteacher leads from the front and is continually involved in checking learning in the school, talking with pupils and staff and greeting parents, carers and pupils on arrival most mornings. She sets a good example for the family and community aspects of the school, when, for example, regularly helping to serve lunch to pupils.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have a very accurate, detailed and realistic view of the school's effectiveness. This has enabled them to manage the development of teaching and the identification of training needs which have resulted in good and sometimes outstanding teaching. Checks on teaching and learning, many by the headteacher, are thorough and accurate in their conclusions.
- However there is still insufficient outstanding teaching consistently throughout the whole school so that pupils can make outstanding sustained progress in their learning over time.
- Other improvements include the introduction of a range of detailed and understandable methods of tracking the progress that pupils make, excellent attendance and punctuality, and consistently outstanding behaviour.
- The deputy headteacher is an excellent teaching role model as well as successfully leading the improvement of pupils' performance in mathematics. Other leaders, especially those new to the school, are rapidly being trained to take on a range of responsibilities in the management of pupils' learning.
- There is high morale among staff, who share leaders' ambitions for the school and express great pride in the school and its pupils.
- School leaders provide innovative and imaginative activities across all subjects, resulting in high standards in a number of them. Leaders are always prepared to use people from outside to provide many rich and varied activities for pupils.
- The primary school sports funding is being spent on a sports coach, training courses for members of staff and the employment and training of a lunchtime play leader. New after-school clubs, including for infants, have also been created. This has led to pupils developing a wider range of physical skills and increasing their understanding of teamwork and healthy living.
- As a result, and combined with pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, the school is promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education very effectively.
- The school promotes equal opportunities successfully, and is fully inclusive. This results in no discrimination through gender, ethnic heritage, disability or special educational needs.
- The local authority regards the school and its leaders highly. It supports the school effectively in identifying the areas for improvement.
- The school has an excellent partnership with parents and carers, and leaders do all they can to encourage parents and carers to understand and be involved in their children's education. Parents, carers and governors worked particularly hard to raise money for the building extension.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors, led by a knowledgeable and determined Chair of the Governing Body, work closely with the headteacher and understand well the strengths of the school and where it needs improvement. This helps them to challenge leaders on a regular basis, and also identify their own training needs. Governors are able to bring a number of diverse personal skills to help in the management of the school. They set realistic but challenging performance targets for the headteacher and have a thorough understanding of staff performance and targets in relation

to the learning of pupils, and pay progression. Governors monitor pupil premium funding in fine detail and know how these pupils perform in comparison to other pupils in the school. They also carefully analyse the spending of the new sports funding and the subsequent outcomes for the skills and health of pupils. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and that school policies are regularly reviewed.

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	126414
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	431487

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Todhunter
Headteacher	Jackie Chalk
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 February 2009
Telephone number	0138 082 8334
Email address	admin@seend.wilts.sch.uk

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