

Sibertswold Church of England Primary School at Shepherdswell

Coldred Road, Shepherdswell, Dover, CT15 7LF

Inspection dates

4–5 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school has improved rapidly since its last inspection because leaders have acted quickly and successfully to address the weaknesses it identified.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement, especially that of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Members of the governing body have a detailed and accurate understanding of all aspects of the school's performance. This enables governors to challenge school leaders to improve teaching and pupils' achievement still further.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe. They say that bullying is extremely rare and that they know staff will deal very effectively with any occurrences.
- Teachers plan activities which are well suited to pupils' different needs and abilities. They make sure that pupils know how well they are doing and how they can improve their work.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start to their school lives. Teachers and other adults make sure they are well prepared for the next stage of their formal education.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school from their starting points. As a result, by the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment is above the national average in both English and mathematics.
- The school's curriculum makes a good contribution to promoting pupils' achievement and enhancing their personal development and well-being.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils have a very good understanding of different cultures and traditions. Pupils from different backgrounds get on very well together.
- Parents are supportive of the school. Most believe that their children are taught well and that they make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The measures that leaders have introduced to improve teaching have not yet had time to result in pupils' achievement being outstanding.
- Leaders at all levels in the school have not ensured that teaching is of the highest quality in all subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons, observing all the classes in the school and all the teachers present during the inspection at least once. Most of these observations took place jointly with senior leaders. The inspectors also made shorter visits to a number of other lessons and activities. Inspectors attended an assembly, examined samples of pupils' written work, and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils, the Chair, Vice Chair and two other members of the Governing Body, as well as with staff, and with a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also held informal discussions with a number of parents and carers.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's information on pupils' attainment and progress, and records of attendance. They examined safeguarding procedures and records of the school's own lesson observations, as well as the school's self-evaluation, performance management and planning documents.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of 40 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. They also considered 18 questionnaires completed by members of the teaching and support staff.

Inspection team

Robin Gaff, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Helen Hutchings	Additional inspector
Roger Fenwick	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class.
- About one in eight pupils is eligible for the pupil premium. This is additional government funding provided for disadvantaged children who are looked after or known to be eligible for free school meals. This proportion is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, just over one in six pupils, is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school is part of a federation together with Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School. The two schools share a single governing body and are led by an executive headteacher.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club, managed by the governing body, for its own pupils.
- Since the school's last inspection there have been a number of changes of staff, including staff who have been appointed to positions of responsibility.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make substantial and sustained progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers put into practice in all subjects the good and outstanding practice which has been developed in the school
 - leaders at all levels make a similarly strong contribution to raising pupils' achievement in areas where it is not yet outstanding.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have succeeded in uniting the staff in support of their drive for improvement. This has helped to bring about, over a relatively short period of time, a significant rise in the quality of teaching and in pupils' achievement. Leaders have been particularly effective in accelerating the progress made by previously underachieving groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Leaders' success in using additional funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well demonstrates the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity. Leaders have also made good use of extra money provided to develop provision for sports and physical education. They have, for example, increased the range of sporting activities available to pupils, and have improved teachers' ability to teach them. This is leading to pupils reaching higher levels of skill and fitness.
- Leaders hold staff firmly to account for meeting demanding but realistic targets. They make sure that teachers and teaching assistants benefit from the training and support they need to improve their performance. Teachers new to the school or the profession spoke warmly of the support and encouragement they had received from all their colleagues, not just from school leaders.
- Subject and other middle leaders, some of whom have been appointed to their positions fairly recently, have considerable expertise in and enthusiasm for the areas for which they are responsible. They are not all as yet being wholly effective in ensuring that improvement targets are being met in every respect.
- Leaders have adapted the curriculum so that it is now more effective in promoting the achievement of different groups of pupils, including the most and least able. A wide range of special events, trips and visits enhance pupils' learning, and their enjoyment of learning. The breakfast and after-school clubs provide pupils with a secure and stimulating environment.
- The school's excellent provision for personal and social education, including assemblies, promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely effectively. Pupils gain a well-developed understanding of different cultures and traditions, and of the fundamental British values of democracy and tolerance. This prepares them very well for life in modern Britain. Pupils who come from different backgrounds relate extremely well to one another, and there is no evidence of any discrimination.
- The local authority has helped to improve the quality of teaching by providing staff with suitable training. The school has also benefited from the work it does in collaboration with other local schools, including the primary school with which it is federated, by sharing expertise in particular areas.
- Most of the parents who expressed a view feel that the school responds well to any concerns they may have, and would recommend it to others.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because the measures leaders have introduced to bring about improvement have not yet had time to have their full impact in all areas of the school's work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and of its priorities for further development. They know how well its pupils are achieving, compared with those in other schools. Their frequent visits enable governors to appreciate the quality of teaching. Because of the regular reports they receive from and their meetings with school leaders, they know what is being done to improve teaching in specific areas and to eradicate any weaker practice. Governors challenge leaders to aim for even higher targets. They understand and fully support the ways in which leaders make sure that any pay increases for teachers are justified by their performance. This includes teachers' effectiveness in raising pupils' achievement. Governors take good care of the school's budget and use it effectively, for example, by enabling the building to be adapted to provide extra teaching facilities. Governors ensure that the school meets government requirements for safeguarding pupils. By reviewing them regularly, they also make sure that its policies and procedures are effective.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' positive attitudes make a good contribution to their progress in lessons. Pupils respond promptly to adults' instructions and requests. This enables classroom activities to proceed smoothly.
- Pupils say that, occasionally, their learning is disrupted by poor behaviour. They also report, however, that teachers deal quickly and effectively with any rare occurrences. Pupils' understanding of the importance of good behaviour indicates that the school promotes their moral and social development well.

- Around the school and in the playground, pupils behave sensibly and considerately, with older pupils taking particular care to look out for younger ones. Pupils behave respectfully, listen attentively and participate enthusiastically in assemblies.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and have many opportunities to do so, for example by representing their classes on the school council.
- The very large majority of those parents who responded to the Parent View survey agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet or school equipment.
- Pupils say they are not concerned about bullying. They know what it is and are very much aware of the different forms it can take, such as prejudice-related or cyber bullying. They are completely confident that staff that will deal with it effectively, should it occur.
- None of the many pupils and parents who spoke to inspectors, and none of the staff who expressed their views, raised any concerns about pupils' safety, or about bullying.
- Leaders make sure that the school premises are secure and that the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently above the national average.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers throughout the school, including in the Reception class, have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave. They make very good use of classroom displays to stimulate pupils' curiosity and to enhance their learning.
- Teachers make good use of information about pupils' prior attainment and any additional needs to plan tasks which are well matched to pupils' different abilities.
- Teachers' secure grasp of the range of subjects they teach, especially English and mathematics, enables them to explain topics clearly and accurately, and to overcome any misunderstandings pupils may have. This ensures that pupils learn, for example, how to use a range of vocabulary in their writing, and to solve mathematical problems using the most appropriate methods.
- Teachers make sure that pupils understand clearly what they are intended to learn. They successfully use a range of strategies to engage and to maintain pupils' interest. Teachers use questioning well, not only to check pupils' understanding but also to develop their knowledge. If pupils make faster or slower progress than anticipated, then usually they adapt tasks so that pupils are challenged at the right level.
- In most subjects, teachers give pupils detailed feedback about where they have succeeded and how they can make their work even better. Teachers also give pupils regular opportunities to respond to their comments. This enables teachers to be sure that pupils have benefited from their advice.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors, as well as most of those who responded to the online survey, confirmed that they believe their children are well taught and that they receive homework appropriate for their age.
- Teaching is not outstanding because teachers are not yet ensuring that pupils make similarly good progress in all subject areas. Teachers do not always plan activities, for example in science, that are as closely tailored to pupils' needs and interests as they do in mathematics and English.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' good achievement, including in reading, writing and mathematics, shows that they are well equipped to succeed when they go on to secondary school.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 in both English and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, the standards they reach are in line with or above those reached by pupils nationally.
- Pupils' attainment in Key Stage 2 is also above the national average, and in recent years has risen at a faster rate than found nationally. The proportions of pupils reaching above-average standards in national tests in 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics showed that most had made good or very good progress from their starting points. This includes pupils from different backgrounds, as well as the small

number who are learning English as an additional language.

- Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. They say that the school gives them good opportunities and lots of encouragement to read widely and often. Pupils make good use of their knowledge of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) to read complex or unfamiliar words.
- Pupils develop increasingly sophisticated written communication skills as they progress through the school. By the time they leave, they can write confidently and accurately in a range of styles and for different purposes, such as descriptive, factual and imaginative writing. Pupils also gain a good grasp of mathematical techniques and processes. This enables them to interpret information presented in different forms, such as graphs, and to solve problems, including those relating to real-life situations.
- The most able pupils achieve well in both English and mathematics. This is because teachers give these pupils tasks which provide them with a suitable level of challenge, and enable them to develop their skills to a high level.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational make similar, and in some cases better, progress than other pupils. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to make sure that these pupils can benefit fully from whole-class and small-group activities, specially adapted when appropriate. Teaching assistants also ensure that pupils are fully involved in classroom activities, such as discussions.
- The school is making increasingly good use of the extra funding it receives for its small number of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils are now making good progress throughout the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils' results in mathematics, reading and writing in the 2014 national tests showed that they were less than half a term behind other pupils in the school. The results also indicated that disadvantaged pupils were almost two terms ahead of other pupils nationally. However, the equivalent group's attainment in 2012 had been almost two years behind that of other pupils in the school, and more than two terms behind that of other pupils nationally. This shows that the school has succeeded in narrowing significantly the gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils.
- Most parents agree that their children make good progress.
- Pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding. This is because pupils' achievement in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school is good rather than excellent. It is also because pupils are not yet making consistently rapid and sustained progress in a wide range of subjects.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the school in the Reception class with levels of skills and knowledge which are broadly typical for their age. They reach a good level of development in all areas of learning, including their reading and basic writing skills. Children also make good progress in developing their ability to work and play together and on their own. This results in them being well prepared to build on their learning when they begin Key Stage 1.
- Adults plan a range of activities for children which are well matched to their different abilities and interests. This includes the small number of disadvantaged children, as well as those who are disabled or have special educational needs. Children make a good start in learning to read and write because staff teach them phonics skills accurately, and in ways that make learning fun. They help children to understand a range of different words and to write them accurately. This was evident, for instance, when they wrote letters to Santa Claus. Adults also give children good opportunities to develop a firm grasp of what numbers mean and how to use them.
- Children behave well and learn how to keep themselves safe, for example when riding the tricycles in the outdoor area. Staff make sure that children quickly refocus on what they are meant to be doing if their attention wanders.
- Leaders check carefully on children's progress to make sure that none are left behind. They have developed both indoor and outdoor areas so that they provide children with a safe and stimulating environment in which they can thrive. They recognise that outdoor facilities are not always used as well as they could be to promote children's learning and development.
- Leaders work closely with parents and keep them well informed about how well their children are doing. Parents who spoke to the inspectors were especially complimentary about how quickly their children had settled into school, and the staff's approachability and helpfulness.

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	118691
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	450924

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Webster
Executive headteacher	Liz Bird
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 June 2013
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