

Chartridge Combined School

Cogdells Lane, Chartridge, Chesham, HP5 2TW

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2015

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

- Chartridge is a popular school and an integral part of the local community. Parents, pupils and staff are right to be proud of being part of the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance has remained at a high level for the past few years. They love learning and behave extremely well inside and outside the school.
- Pupils' safety and welfare are made a very high priority. Consequently, pupils are kept very safe and say so. Their parents agree with them.
- Pupils make good progress through the school. By the time they reach Year 6, standards are above average in reading and well above in mathematics.
- The learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very well catered for, which enables them to make at least good progress.
- The school provides pupils with a rich variety of learning opportunities, enhanced by a wide range of after-school clubs and activities. There is a strong emphasis on physical education and the arts. Literacy and numeracy are taught well.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in Britain today and for the next stage of their education.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils well and relationships are supportive. Learning is made fun. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and provide clear and constructive feedback to help pupils improve.
- Learning support assistants are deployed well and provide effective support to individuals and small groups of pupils.
- School leaders and governors work with determination to bring about continued improvement. They have improved the quality of teaching, with good support for new teachers, and sustained pupils' good achievement.
- The headteacher's excellent leadership and passion for the school inspire the staff, who are loyal and keen to learn.
- Governors know the school well and provide good support and challenge to leaders. The Bucks Learning Trust (BLT) provides timely and well-focused help to the school and training for staff.
- The early years provision is good and children make good progress across all the areas of learning. Adults make sure children are safe and well cared for and there is good communication with parents.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing, although broadly average and improving, are not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- The most-able pupils are not always challenged enough in the early years or in Key Stage 1.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils in all year groups engaged in a range of activities in different subjects. Many observations took place alongside the headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and looked at written work in all classes, including records of the learning of children in Reception.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Meetings were held with school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and, separately, two other members of the governing body. The lead inspector met with the school’s link Bucks Learning Trust (BLT) adviser.
- Inspectors took account of the 56 responses to Ofsted’s online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and responses to parent, staff and pupil questionnaires undertaken by the school. Inspectors also held informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a number of school documents, including: the school’s own evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan; information about pupils’ progress and the support given to disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; evidence about the quality of teaching; minutes of the governing body; and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors also took account of the 22 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helena McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Colin Lower

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Chartridge Combined is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There is one form in each year group from the full-time Reception class to Year 6.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in care) is much lower than the national average. There were no eligible disadvantaged pupils in the 2014 Year 6 cohort.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is just under the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning from 8.00am.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has had significant changes of staff since the last inspection, with three newly qualified teachers appointed this year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the most-able pupils in Key Stage 1 and children in the early years are fully challenged by the activities they are given, so that they make even more rapid progress.
- Ensure that standards in writing improve so that they are equal to those that pupils achieve in reading and mathematics, by providing further opportunities for pupils to write more in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is very well led by the headteacher, whose passion and commitment have helped to create an ethos where good teaching and pupils' excellent behaviour are prominent. All staff are excellent role models for pupils.
- There is a strong focus on improving teaching and support where teaching has been less than good. Leaders check the quality of teaching regularly, and teachers are set challenging targets which include improving pupils' progress. As a result, teaching has improved.
- School leaders are ambitious for the school and their evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is thorough and mainly accurate. They know what needs to improve, for example standards in writing, and have put in place a number of measures this year that are starting to bear fruit. The turnover of staff, including those with leadership roles, has slowed down the rate of progress of some initiatives.
- Teachers with subject responsibilities are increasingly effective in driving improvements in their areas through offering advice, observing lessons and looking at teachers' plans and pupils' work. Several teachers are new in post this year and so have had little time to have the intended impact on standards.
- All staff show great concern for pupils' safety and welfare and know pupils well. All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met. There are good links with parents and the local authority, and concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively. Record keeping is very good. Consequently, pupils are kept very safe.
- The school has established a strong culture of equality of opportunity, with respect for those of different cultures and beliefs. Discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils commented on this and said that the school 'welcomes people of different religions and race'. As a result, the school is a harmonious, working community.
- Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well led and managed and has a good impact on these pupils' progress. The school makes good use of its funds for the small number of disadvantaged pupils. Funds benefit each pupil in a range of different ways, including extra support for mathematics and English, breakfast club and after-school clubs and trips.
- The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced range of subjects. There is an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy, along with an emphasis on physical education and creative subjects. Pupils have access to a wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities. Staff have carefully integrated the expectations of the new National Curriculum into a topic approach which takes account of parents' and pupils' ideas for themes. As a result, pupils achieve well from the good range of learning opportunities provided.
- The general values expressed by the school in assemblies and subjects promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils know about democracy, which is taught in history and assemblies and through votes for school council and heads of house. They gain understanding about different cultures and faiths, and learn respect and tolerance in religious education and personal and social education, for example. They are given a range of responsibilities, including helping younger children with reading. They regularly take part in raising money for charity. The values pupils learn in school prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- Sport funds are used well to provide specialist physical education lessons for pupils, which are observed by class teachers to enhance their own skills. In addition, the funds are used to buy into a sports partnership with a local high school, which provides sports events in which all pupils take part. There is also a popular and successful week of physical activity called 'Fit 4 Life' in the spring term. Consequently, more pupils engage in regular physical activity and gain in health and well-being.
- School leaders have drawn on support and advice from the Bucks Learning Trust (BLT), for example, with moderation of teachers' assessments. A recent review of the early years provision by a BLT adviser requested by the headteacher, was timely and useful and is being followed up by in-school support. Subject leaders have benefited from attendance at BLT subject leaders' meetings and training. BLT support has a positive impact on school performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are effective. They bring a range of useful skills and experience to the strategic leadership of the school. They are positive about the way it is led and managed and provide an appropriate level of challenge to school leaders. Some governors are regular visitors to the school, sharing their expertise, for example in computing. Governors who are linked to year groups and subjects visit to get to know those aspects of the school.
 - Statutory responsibilities are carried out well. Governors ensure that funds, such as the pupil premium

and sport funds, are used for the benefit of pupils.

- Governors oversee the way that the school manages the performance of staff, linked to individual targets and training. They are aware of the quality of teaching and how underperformance is tackled and good performance rewarded.
- Governors make themselves well informed about pupils' progress and attainment through the headteacher's updates and external data on pupils' progress and attainment. Some governors have a good understanding of the data, which enables them to ask challenging questions.
- Members of the governing body take part in a range of relevant training and have links with other governing bodies in order to share good practice.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are polite and courteous to each other, to staff and to visitors. They dress smartly and help to keep the school clean and tidy and free from graffiti. They take care over the presentation of work in their exercise books.
- Pupils comment on the good behaviour in lessons and around the school. They help each other to behave well and are very clear about the rules on behaviour. They show empathy towards a few of their peers who sometimes present challenging behaviour because of their special educational needs. Pupils described their classmates and teachers as 'kind'.
- Staff and parents are unreservedly positive about the way that the school promotes good behaviour. There has been only one fixed term exclusion in the past few years and very few incidents of poor behaviour shown in the school's logs.
- Pupils in all year groups enjoy learning and have extremely positive attitudes in lessons. They demonstrate a real thirst for knowledge and understanding, as seen when they were tackling challenging mathematics problems in Key Stage 2. Their enthusiasm for learning and excellent behaviour has a very positive impact on their progress and attainment.
- Attendance has been sustained at a high level over the past few years. Attendance is a priority, with termly certificates for 100% attendance. Persistent absentees are few and they are followed up rigorously.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say that they feel exceptionally safe in school. They were seen coming joyfully into school in the morning, and parents describe how their children feel very happy in school. Parents are unreservedly positive about their children feeling safe, as shown by their responses to Parent View.
- Pupils know very well how to keep safe, for example from cyber bullying and 'stranger danger'. They say that there is no bullying in school and they know who they would turn to if it happened. They are right to have a great deal of trust in their teachers, support assistants, midday supervisors and each other.
- The school site is secure and all areas where pupils play and work are well supervised.
- Staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment for their suitability to work in school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and other adults know pupils well and relationships are very supportive. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and how they will respond. As a result, behaviour is managed effectively and discreetly so that learning is not interrupted.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are enthusiastic, which makes learning fun for the pupils. For example, pupils took great delight in suggesting what characters in the book *The Highwayman* would say after the teacher showed them a range of costumes and artefacts.
- Mathematics is taught well, with particularly good results by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are increasingly confident and fluent in their knowledge of mathematical processes and facts. They are encouraged to give reasons for how they work something out, and are given practical problems that require them to apply their knowledge. Consequently, pupils enjoy mathematics and achieve well.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well from the Reception class onwards. Pupils enjoy sounding out the letters and using their knowledge to read unfamiliar words. The youngest pupils demonstrate their recall of sounds and letters and give examples of words which are spelled the same but have different meanings. All pupils are given ample opportunities to read in school, with good use of the

school library, and are encouraged to read at home.

- The teaching of literacy is good, but pupils sometimes lack opportunities to write more in different subjects. Consequently, they do not reinforce their written skills as much as in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers apply the school's policy for assessing pupils' work consistently well. They check pupils' written work regularly and include detailed comments that are both encouraging but also suggest how work can be improved. Pupils are very aware of their targets and what they need to do to improve. As a result, their progress accelerates and they achieve well.
- Pupils are provided with an appropriate range of homework, which increases as they get older to prepare them for secondary school. The school has introduced homework learning logs, which children enjoy using in creative ways. Consequently, learning continues beyond school and supports pupils' achievement.
- Learning support assistants are well trained and provide skilful help to pupils individually or in small groups. They ensure that all pupils progress well and that those who need it are given extra support and attention.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school in the Reception class with knowledge and skills broadly typical for their age. They make good progress across all areas of learning, which gives them a good basis for work in Year 1.
- Progress across the school is good, with the most rapid progress in Key Stage 2. In 2014, most Year 6 pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics from their different starting points. Attainment in reading has been, at least, above average over the past few years. In mathematics, attainment has been consistently well above average. Pupils achieve well in the spelling, grammar and punctuation test.
- Pupils' attainment and progress are less strong in writing, compared with reading and mathematics. Pupils' end of Key Stage 2 attainment in writing has been close to the national average over the past three years. Progress was not good in writing in 2014. School leaders are applying a range of measures to improve writing, which are beginning to have an impact. Writing is improving, as evident in the pupils' work, but pupils are still not given enough opportunities to write more in all subjects.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and attain well by the end of Key Stage 2. In mathematics, in 2014, two thirds of Year 6 pupils attained Level 5 and nearly one third reached Level 6. Nearly two thirds of pupils attained Level 5 in reading and just under a third did so in writing. The most-able pupils are not always challenged enough in Key Stage 1 or in the Reception class, which reduces the progress they make in these years.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been well above average. Over the past few years, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was close to, and sometimes, just above, the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. There was a dip in 2014, mainly because the cohort included three pupils with significant learning difficulties.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress due to the good teaching they receive. Their individual needs are planned for carefully and they receive good support in class, individually or in small groups.
- There were no disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014, but in previous years they outperformed pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. They attain standards equal to others in the school in all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils are catered for well. They make good progress and, currently, any attainment gaps with other pupils in school are closing.

The early years provision is good

- Children enter the Reception class with a range of pre-school experiences, but quickly settle into the school's routines. They behave well and are responsive to adult instructions. They are gaining in confidence and sensibly choose and eat their snack independently. Adults model expected behaviour well for children and establish a happy and caring atmosphere.
- The early years provision is led and managed effectively and great care is taken to ensure children's safety. Parents are right to feel that children are looked after well and kept safe. Staff have the necessary first aid and other appropriate training for this age group. Children's achievements are tracked carefully and recorded so that staff can plan the next steps in learning for each child.
- Communication and links with parents are good. Home visits are made to all parents before children start school. Parents are invited to a 'come and play' session, where they can see what their children are learning and look at the environment and displays. They appreciate the opportunities to talk to staff each

day.

- The environment is organised to provide a range of learning opportunities for children inside and outside that will help develop their skills, knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning. Adults ensure that all children are making good progress in learning their letters and sounds through daily phonics sessions with small groups.
- Results at the end of Reception are good, with an above-average proportion of children reaching a good level of development, due to the good teaching. The majority of children reached expected standards in all areas of learning last year, including literacy and mathematics. They achieved particularly well in physical development and expressive arts and design. The current cohort is making good progress across all areas of learning.
- Children have opportunities to select activities for themselves and most persevere and sustain concentration. They work well together. An excellent example was seen when children worked as a team to build a construction outside that allowed water to flow from one pipe to another. Some of the activities are not challenging enough for the most-able children and opportunities are sometimes missed for adults to interact with children to provide that challenge.

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	110298
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	448410

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alastair Paton
Headteacher	Steve Butler
Date of previous school inspection	22 June 2010
Telephone number	01494837498
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