

# Silchester Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Silchester, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 2NJ

**Inspection dates** 20–21 May 2015

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

- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is high across the school. In 2014 pupils achieved high results in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 2 and in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Early years children make good progress and leave the Reception year well-prepared for learning in Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is of at least good quality across the school. Teachers ensure that pupils make good progress in their subjects.
- The school curriculum is outstanding. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- Pupils are proud of their learning and achievements. Their behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime is of very high quality.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is very rigorous, thorough and effective.
- The headteacher, other leaders and governors have high expectations. They have worked together to ensure that teaching and achievement are consistently good and that provision has improved.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching and achievement are not yet outstanding. Teachers do not always give pupils, including the most able, work that contains high levels of challenge.
- Teachers do not always ensure that all pupils remain focused on their work.
- Subject leaders do not take on enough responsibility for checking and strengthening the quality of teaching.
- The school development plan does not clearly identify subject leaders' responsibilities towards improving the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in nine lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. Two lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with pupils, two members of the governing body, the headteacher and other members of staff. A discussion was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including support for pupils who need extra help. They listened to pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils should learn in each subject and plans for the school's future development. They scrutinised the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings. The inspectors also looked at records of how pupils' learning is monitored and of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents were taken into account through the 55 responses to the online Parent View survey and one letter that was received. The inspectors also held discussions with several parents.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 19 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

## Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helen Springett

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a below-average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for children known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority) is much lower than the national average. There are very few disadvantaged pupils in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is much lower than in most other schools. There are very few of these pupils in the school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school teaches early years children in one full-time Reception class.
- There have been several changes in the leadership of the school since the last inspection. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2014; the deputy headteacher, previously an assistant headteacher, took up his post in January 2015; he led the school as an acting headteacher between April and September 2014; the mathematics leader took up her leadership post in January 2015; the English leader returned from maternity leave in September 2014, and a new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in June 2014.

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

- Improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching so that they become outstanding by:
  - ensuring that teachers give pupils of all abilities, including the most able, work that contains consistently high levels of challenge
  - making certain that teachers consistently check that all pupils remain focused on their work.
- Further develop the role of subject leaders by:
  - increasing their responsibilities for checking and improving the quality of teaching
  - ensuring that the school development plan clearly identifies subject leaders' responsibilities towards improving the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is passionate about wanting all pupils to do well. The staff as a whole share her high expectations and concern for the good progress of all pupils. As a result, teaching and achievement are consistently good.
- Senior leaders have improved the way that the school uses information about pupils' achievement. They analyse pupils' progress carefully and use their understanding to plan how best to meet pupils' needs. Leaders make efficient use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, for example, by providing extra teaching assistants to work with them. All groups of pupils make good progress as a result.
- The school curriculum is outstanding. Pupils' learning about a very broad range of subjects is deepened through the school's very strong promotion of spiritual and moral values. Pupils explore issues such as fair trade and children's rights and learn much about different religions and cultures. Such work prepares pupils for life in modern Britain extremely well. The school's highly positive values and teaching also demonstrate its very strong promotion of equal opportunities and how it guards against discrimination and unfair treatment.
- Senior leaders have high expectations of teachers and manage their performance well. The headteacher makes sure that staff understand where their teaching needs to develop and take action to improve it further.
- Subject leaders contribute to school improvement effectively through their work on developing the curriculum and monitoring the quality of pupils' work. However, some subject leaders still take on too little responsibility for checking and strengthening the quality of teaching in their respective areas.
- The school development plan is well judged and identifies sensible actions to be taken to strengthen school provision. However, this plan does not clearly identify subject leaders' responsibilities towards improving the school. As a result, it is not always clear who is responsible for leading developments or checking their effectiveness.
- The school uses its additional sports premium funding well to increase pupils' participation in a wide range of sports, including competitive events. The school has been accredited with the Bronze Games award.
- The local authority has given good support to the headteacher and other leaders new to the school. It has given leaders helpful and beneficial advice.
- The school has developed good relationships with parents. A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion thought that the school was well led. Almost all parents said they would recommend the school to others.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. The headteacher ensures that all staff give safeguarding work a high priority. The school makes sure that pupils are as well protected from harm as they can be.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body keeps a careful eye on the quality of teaching and how well pupils achieve compared to national expectations. Governors conduct focused visits to see the quality of school provision for themselves. Governors explore information about pupils' progress in depth and expect leaders to explain what they are doing to strengthen it further. Governors check that leaders have high expectations of teachers and that any pay awards are properly justified by good performance. They make sure that senior leaders give staff, including those new to the school, the support they need to perform to a high standard. Governors checks that school development priorities are sound and that the school performs well against national expectations. They have a good impact on school improvement.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn and proud of their work. They work together well in lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour towards one another in the playground and during lunchtime is excellent. Pupils are very friendly and supportive of one another.
- The school manages pupils' behaviour well. Pupils understand the consequences of poor behaviour and why it is important to behave well. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors demonstrated a good understanding of right and wrong. They also said that behaviour was good in the school.

- School records show very few incidents of poor behaviour over time. They also demonstrate that the school has successfully helped particular pupils improve their behaviour.
- Teachers do not always check that all pupils remain focused on their work. There are a few times when a very small number of pupils go off-task during lessons. This happens when the level of challenge is too low for them.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors demonstrated extremely good awareness of how they could avoid risks in a large range of circumstances, including when using the internet. Pupils were very alert to 'stranger danger', both in the real world and when online.
- The school makes sure that any possible risks to pupils are minimised as much as possible. Leaders and governors take extremely diligent and thorough precautions to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that staff listened to them well and that they felt entirely safe at school.
- All parents who left an opinion thought that their children were safe and happy at the school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good in all classes. Pupils learn well in all subjects as a result.
- Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' needs and abilities. They ensure that pupils with particular needs or difficulties are supported well, including through the efficient use of skilled teaching assistants.
- Teachers' marking of work has improved over time. Pupils' books show that teachers now give pupils consistently helpful written guidance that advises them how to improve their work. Pupils act on this advice well.
- The school teaches reading very effectively, with the consequence that pupils' attainment in reading is very high. Pupils who talked to the inspectors demonstrated a deep love of reading.
- The teaching of writing has varied in effectiveness over time. However, the school has recently strengthened its focus on developing pupils' writing skills early during their time at school. Pupils' standards of writing have strongly improved as a result.
- Mathematics teaching is good overall, though the tasks given to pupils vary in the amount of challenge that they offer. Pupils make good progress and attain high results in the subject.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' learning are typically high. However, sometimes teachers do not give pupils, including the most able, work that contains a high enough level of challenge. A very small number of pupils can lose concentration and go off-task during these times. Some teachers do not always notice this.
- A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion thought that their children were taught well.

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils attained high results in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2014. Their results in writing were very high at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, but not as strong at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' attainment and achievement are typically high.
- Pupils currently in the school are producing higher standards of work overall than pupils previously at the school. Pupils' attainment in writing has strongly improved over previous years.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- There are very few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in the school. This means that it is not possible to compare their achievement to that of other pupils. However, individual pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in all subjects given their starting points. This is because the school carefully identifies and responds to their particular needs.
- Similarly, there are very few disadvantaged pupils in the school. Because of this it is not possible to compare their achievement with that of other pupils nationally. However, the school is successfully closing the gap between this group of pupils and others in the school. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in all subjects.
- The most able pupils make good progress in all subjects. They attained high results in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014, though their results in writing that year were below

national averages. Their results in 2014 at the end of Key Stage 2 were high in mathematics and very high in reading and writing. The most able pupils' books show that they are currently working to a high standard.

- A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion thought that their children made good progress.
- Pupils' progress, while good, is not fast enough overall to be outstanding. This is because teachers do not always give pupils enough challenge to ensure that their progress is rapid.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children's achievement is good. They enter Reception with skills more or less typical for their age and make good progress across all areas of learning during their time there. Their skills and abilities at the end of Reception in 2014 were much higher than those typically expected of their age. Children are well prepared for learning in Year 1 by the time they leave Reception.
- Early years teaching is good. Staff ensure that children are typically challenged and learn well in child-led activities as well as adult-led ones.
- Early years behaviour is also good. Children share, work and play happily and co-operatively together. They are keen to learn and proud to show off their work. However, there are a few times when children's enthusiasm gets the better of them. Some children can call out during these times and distract others from their learning.
- Staff ensure children's safety well. They keep the early years resources and grounds safe and teach children how to avoid risk.
- The early years staff work well with parents. They communicate with parents regularly through an 'open-door' policy at the beginning and end of the school day. The school uses 'wow' cards to enable parents to share information about children's achievements outside school.
- The early years leader constantly assesses children's skills and development. She uses her understanding of children's needs to inform provision on a daily basis.
- Early years leadership is good. The early years leader has strengthened the Reception class's focus on children's learning. As a result, children's writing skills are developing more quickly than was the case previously. The early years leader has also improved children's attainment by the time they leave Reception.
- Early years staff make effective use of the early years indoor and outdoor classrooms overall. However, the early years outdoor classroom is not developed well enough to further boost children's learning and progress.

## 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>	116369
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448793

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	189
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jon Saltmarsh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Simmons
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01189 700256
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