

# Sherington Church of England School

Sherington, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, MK16 9NF

**Inspection dates** 23–24 June 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 |                      | 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.

- School leaders and governors have consolidated good teaching and achievement. They accurately identify the school's strengths and areas to improve through rigorous and effective monitoring activities.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and reach above average standards.
- Teaching is good because most of the time teachers use their good understanding of what pupils can do to plan work which stretches the learning of pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about their lessons. They concentrate and do their best at all times.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school because they care for each other and know that adults will help them when necessary. Staff are well trained in order to protect pupils and keep them safe.
- Pupils are extremely polite and well mannered. They show high levels of respect to adults and pupils from all backgrounds.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are outstanding in lessons and around the school, and this makes an excellent contribution to their achievement. They are very proud of the family atmosphere in school and the great care they take of younger and vulnerable pupils.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are extremely satisfied with the work of the school. They say that their children are very happy and excited about their lessons, and that they are well prepared for moving to the next stage of their education.
- Governance is effective because governors hold staff rigorously to account for pupils' achievement. Governors undertake regular training so that they can judge pupils' progress for themselves and plan appropriately for further improvement.
- Provision in the early years is good because staff are well trained. They understand children's abilities and plan exciting activities across all areas of the curriculum.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Occasionally, when the whole class is taught together, teaching does not sufficiently challenge the most able pupils to stretch their learning.
- Marking does not consistently show pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils do not develop their handwriting as well as they should and are not yet writing in cursive script.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited an assembly and saw eight lessons. She was accompanied by the deputy headteacher in all of these, and by the headteacher for two. She also looked at pupils' workbooks.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at break and lunchtimes, and around the school site. She had a formal discussion with the pupils in the school council, and informal discussions with other pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and also of the six responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector met with parents, the headteacher, other school leaders, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority. She looked at school documents, including those relating to pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance, records of monitoring, school self-evaluation, plans for improvement and information relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Lynne Bradbury, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- Children attend full time in the Reception class.
- The majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school entered into a federation with St Andrew's Infant School, Great Linford, on 1 September 2011.
- There have been some staffing changes this year, supported by the federation arrangements.
- The school received a SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection in February 2015.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to further accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - ensuring that work in lessons stretches pupils of all abilities, particularly the most able, so they can achieve their very best
  - ensuring that teachers use their marking consistently to help pupils identify what they have achieved and to clearly know the next steps in their learning
  - giving pupils sufficient opportunities to act on their guidance and improve their work
  - giving pupils greater opportunity to develop their handwriting properly.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have successfully consolidated the good teaching in the school. This is continuing to raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, enabling them to demonstrate exceptional attitudes to learning and thrive as a result. Leaders set high expectations, both of staff and pupils, who are extremely proud of the school's values and high ambitions.
- Relationships in school are warm and nurturing at all levels, and this generates high levels of respect and care. Pupils are highly motivated to learn because of their exciting experiences as they learn in school. Staff build good relationships with parents and communicate well with them so that they understand how to help their children in their learning.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement regularly and carefully. They make good use of this information to plan effective training and improvement.
- Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements and that they are highly effective in keeping pupils safe.
- Discrimination in any form is not tolerated in school. Pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities are fully included in all school activities and are provided with equal opportunity to achieve their best. Staff work effectively with pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable or who face particularly acute personal challenges.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, and their understanding of other faiths, are fully developed across all aspects of school life. This is demonstrated in their high levels of respect and their excellent relationships with others across all groups. Pupils learn about the values that underpin the British way of life, and prepare for their futures in a modern Britain by exploring their own personal visions and practising the values they learn during their time in school.
- The curriculum topics combine a wide range of subjects into exciting experiences where pupils learn how to apply their skills in many different contexts. Pupils' personal and social development is supported well through interesting visits, opportunities to work with pupils in their partner school, and the clubs the school offers.
- Leaders and governors make good use of the performance management system to set challenging targets for teachers to ensure good progress for all pupils.
- Middle leaders check pupils' progress carefully to identify where improvement is needed. They provide appropriate staff training which is effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress. They identify where pupils need extra support or challenge and organise effective extra tuition.
- Very few pupils are eligible for support from the pupil premium funding, but this is used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have extra support where needed and that they enjoy full access to all school visits and clubs. These pupils, who sometimes have complex needs, make good progress in all subjects.
- Occasionally the level of challenge does not stretch the abilities of pupils, particularly the most able, in all aspects of lessons.
- The primary physical education and sports premium is used to supply professional coaching and support staff training. Pupils greatly enjoy the extra activities provided in tennis, football, cricket and gymnastics.
- The local authority supports the school well through formal monitoring and other activities which have helped the school's leaders to improve specific areas such as pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors bring with them high-level professional skills and undertake a wide range of training. This has helped them to support and challenge school leaders effectively. They understand and use data about pupils' progress to set clear priorities for improvement. They visit lessons with school leaders to ensure that they understand the quality of teaching offered and to see what pupils achieve in various subjects. This helps them to determine what needs to be done to improve.
  - Governors hold staff to account through the targets set through the appraisal system. They make decisions about staff pay increases based on the progress pupils make.
  - Governors plan and manage all aspects of school finance well so that all resources support pupil progress and school improvement. They check that extra funding is allocated to support disadvantaged pupils and is effective in improving their progress.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their thirst for learning helps them to make good progress. They work extremely well alone or in teams, and they concentrate and take a great deal of care with their work. They persevere and are determined to succeed, and present their work to a high standard.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely caring and nurturing, and this has established a very happy atmosphere. Pupils are very proud of their work and of their school.
- Pupils are very sensible in class and in the playground. They are proud of the responsibilities they have for helping younger and vulnerable pupils. They enjoy working with the school council to improve their school further, and learn about how democracy works in Britain as they vote for those who represent them.
- During the inspection there was a very harmonious and purposeful atmosphere, with no disruptions of any kind to lessons. Feedback from pupils and examination of the school's records confirm that this is normal for the school.
- Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about their exciting topics and the opportunities they have to apply their basic reading, writing and mathematical skills. They greatly enjoy the sports activities and clubs outside lessons, including football, multi-gym and cricket.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding processes are highly effective in keeping pupils safe.
- Governors ensure that policies and practices are monitored carefully. Staff implement them rigorously and there is a strong commitment to protecting all children, particularly the most vulnerable. The school makes appropriate checks on all visitors and new members of staff.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe at school and know how to keep themselves safe. They understand the different forms that bullying can take, including the sort of bullying which involves the use of mobile phones and the internet. They insist that bullying does not happen in their school but, if it did, they know that staff would deal with it effectively.
- Unkind behaviour which falls short of bullying is dealt with well. Pupils say that if anyone uses unkind language or calls someone a name because they might be different in some way, staff deal with this urgently and successfully.
- Attendance is broadly average. Staff work very hard to ensure that any pupil who finds difficulty attending school is supported to improve their attendance.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching is good and ensures that pupils reach high standards and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points.
- Teachers show high expectations of all aspects of pupils' work and behaviour. They establish highly positive relationships which support pupils' learning and development well, and this leads to good achievement. Currently staff do not set high enough expectations of pupils' handwriting, for example by not expecting pupils to use cursive script (joined writing) in their writing.
- Teachers' assessment of what pupils have achieved is accurate and they use this to set work which stretches pupils of all abilities. Occasionally in aspects of some lessons, the work does not provide enough challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use skilful questioning to help pupils to deepen their understanding, move them on further or identify areas where they need more support.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught well, enabling all pupils to make good use of applying the skills they have learned in their reading and writing.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers encourage pupils to tackle high levels of challenge by applying their current skills in investigations and problem-solving tasks to deepen their understanding of the subject.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning. They are well trained, particularly in working with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They are effective in helping these pupils to be clear about what they are learning.
- Teachers give helpful feedback to pupils during lessons to enable them to correct their thinking and understanding. Teachers' marking is generally limited to giving pupils praise and encouragement; it does not consistently help pupils to understand how to improve their work.

- Teachers use homework effectively. Pupils make good use of weekly opportunities to practise basic reading, writing and mathematical skills, and to investigate their topic work for their homework.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Pupils achieve well from their starting points. In 2014, Year 2 pupils attained above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books show that these standards are consistent in the work of the school and that almost all pupils make good progress.
- The most able pupils in school are making good progress, but they are too few to compare their achievement overall to that of other pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are identified at an early stage and they have good, targeted support, both within classes and outside lessons.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils in the school to evaluate their attainment meaningfully against national standards. Some of these have complex needs. However, they make good progress in all areas compared with all pupils nationally from their starting point.
- Pupils are excited about reading and make good progress because of their good grasp of phonics. They use their reading skills to find out about their topic work. There were too few pupils in Year 1 last year to provide any comparison with national standards based on the phonics screening check.
- Workbooks show that achievement in writing is good. Pupils make good progress and develop their writing skills well for a wide range of purposes in their topic work. Pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling have developed well, though many have not developed a sufficiently high standard of handwriting, for example by not mastering cursive script (joined writing).
- In mathematics, pupils of all abilities make rapid progress in developing basic number skills and applying them in problem-solving situations and investigations. In Reception, children learn to recognise plane shapes (two-dimensional shapes). In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop this understanding further so that they recognise the properties of three-dimensional shapes and can use correct mathematical vocabulary to describe them.
- Pupils apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills well so that they achieve high standards in work across a wide range of subjects. They use these skills well in carrying out research about life in other countries and understanding the traditions and beliefs of different cultures and faiths.

### **The early years provision** is good

- Children join the Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding that are typical for their age, but some have weaknesses in their speech, language, reading and writing. Attainment on entry varies from year to year because there are very small numbers of children in each cohort.
- Teaching is good because teachers usually use their understanding of what children already know to plan exciting activities which stretch children of all abilities. This is not consistent in all lessons, particularly for the most able children.
- Children make good progress in all areas of the curriculum because teachers provide a wide range of opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening alongside their other studies. Their good progress in phonics is built upon this work.
- The children are extremely keen to learn. They work hard and concentrate on their work. They take great delight when they find shapes in the sand or make number sentences successfully. They enjoy exploring the outdoor environment, which is very rich in natural resources.
- Children's achievement is good. They apply phonics competently to support their good progress in reading and writing.
- Leadership is good. Leaders use information about children's progress well to ensure that staff are well trained. Children enter Year 1 well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children are kept safe and the site is secure. Children's good behaviour and relationships support their learning well. They respect adults and each other, and show tolerance of those who are different in some way.
- The school works well with parents and welcomes them as partners. This helps their children to make good 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> | 110407        |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Milton Keynes |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 448734        |

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

|  |  |
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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary controlled                   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–7                                    |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 23                                     |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Dave Argent                            |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Anne Shedden                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 17–18 March 2009                       |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01908 610470                           |
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