

# Cirencester Primary School

Victoria Road, Cirencester, GL7 1EX

**Inspection dates** 1–2 July 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.

- Leadership is good at all levels. Energetic and determined leadership by the acting headteacher, shared by the governors and senior leaders, has led to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. Consequently, the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- Teaching is good and improving. The whole staff work together with determination and enthusiasm to improve the quality of education for all pupils.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children get off to a good start in the early years because it is led very effectively. Good teaching ensures that children enjoy learning and achieve well. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils reached standards in reading, writing and mathematics which were in line with the national average. From where they started their education, this represented good progress for these pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and make a strong contribution to the life of the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents and pupils agree that this is a safe and caring place to learn.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Governors are very knowledgeable. They have a well-informed and very accurate view of the school's performance. Governors work successfully with senior leaders to raise standards further and improve the quality of teaching.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils attain the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics.
- Problem solving in mathematics is sometimes too easy when pupils are not expected to work out for themselves how to tackle these problems.
- The checking of pupils' progress is not as rigorous in other subjects as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The good quality of marking in writing is not seen across all subjects, meaning that pupils do not consistently get the guidance they need to improve their work and use their teachers' good advice in their future work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of lessons, five of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- The school’s work was discussed with members of staff, pupils, parents, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- The acting headteacher was in France, with half of Year 6, on a residential visit.
- Discussions with the acting headteacher were conducted through online conference calls; she attended all team meetings in the same way.
- Inspectors also took account of the views of 54 parents who responded to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, as well as questionnaires completed by staff members.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and examined a wide range of documentation including: minutes from governors’ meetings; external reports on the school’s work; assessment information; safeguarding documents; samples of pupils’ work; and curriculum planning.

## Inspection team

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fiona Robinson	Additional Inspector
Victoria Walker	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school in which almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations, set by the government, for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Cherry Trees Nursery opened in September 2012 and formed part of this inspection.
- There is a choice of full-time or part-time provision for children in the Nursery. Provision in Reception is full time.
- The school provides two breakfast clubs. One of these is for early years children and the other is for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils.
- Cirencester Primary School opened in September 2010 following the amalgamation of Cirencester Infant and Junior Schools.
- The school has a strong partnership with Down Ampney Primary School, a local small school. The previous headteacher was executive headteacher of both schools. The associate headteacher of Cirencester Primary became acting headteacher of Cirencester Primary on his departure. An executive headteacher of both schools has been appointed for September 2015. The schools have separate governing bodies.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that more pupils attain the higher levels, especially in mathematics, by:
  - making sure that pupils have more challenging opportunities to develop their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills in order to deepen their mathematical knowledge and understanding
  - improving the consistency of marking so that guidance for pupils about what they have learnt, and how to improve, is clear in all subjects and teachers check that their good advice is applied in pupils' future work
  - ensuring pupils' progress is checked as rigorously in all subjects as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher's determination and ambition have driven improvements in the last year. She is well supported by senior leaders and the governing body. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved so that pupils behave and achieve well. All of this demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement.
- Strong teamwork, mutual respect and staff willingness to learn from each other are very evident.
- Leaders check the school's effectiveness rigorously and identify accurately appropriate priorities for improvement.
- The roles of all school leaders have developed considerably since the last inspection. Middle and senior leaders all have a strong impact on improving teaching and raising achievement.
- The good leadership of the early years means that the newly opened Nursery is flourishing. Children enter a vibrant and stimulating environment in both the Nursery and Reception classes and make good progress.
- The pupil premium is used successfully. The disadvantaged pupils learn effectively because of the additional support they receive. This targeted support has enabled them to make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school ensures equal opportunities are promoted well. As a result, all groups of pupils, including the most able and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress.
- The school's management of teachers' performance is rigorous. Good use is made of staff expertise within the school along with carefully chosen external training to improve the quality of teaching. There is a clear link between teachers' performance and their salary progression.
- The good quality curriculum promotes pupils' interests and their love of learning effectively. Topics include historical and geographical subjects such as 'Gateways to the World'. These are very effective in extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world as well as having to present their point of view and discuss different opinions. Furthermore, they provide interesting opportunities for pupils to apply and extend their literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The school teaches pupils about the need for tolerance and respect of difference in modern British society and tackles discrimination effectively. For instance, curriculum plans include appropriate emphasis on promoting fundamental British values such as: democracy, the rule of law and respect and tolerance, through the school's values. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fosters good relations very effectively. This is done through subjects such as art, music, personal and social education and religious education as well as a linked programme of assemblies and many exciting visits such as to a local pizza restaurant to make pizzas as part of the 'Young Entrepreneurs Topic' in Year 4 and the annual French residential for Year 6 pupils. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of after-school activities from dance and drama to tennis and angling.
- Parents are kept well informed about how well their children are doing in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the school has not developed fully the checks of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Pupils' good behaviour is supported by their positive attitudes to competitive sport and their enthusiasm for developing their physical well-being. The school effectively uses the additional primary school sport funding to provide professional coaching and staff training. The funding also ensures that sports opportunities are available to everyone.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are highly effective, fully meet requirements and contribute to the school's excellent work to keep pupils safe. Staff are very well trained and are fully alert to any signs that might cause concern.
- The local authority has supported the school well during its period of transition to the appointment of a new headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a very well-informed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because of the information shared with them by senior leaders and their understanding of school and national data. They challenge senior leaders effectively about improvements in the standards pupils reach and they work closely with a range of staff to reflect on the school's performance. Governors check the quality of the school's work regularly. They are ambitious about seeking further improvements.
  - They understand clearly the impact that the arrangements to manage the performance of staff have on

improving the quality of teaching. They articulate clearly how this also affects raising pupils' achievement. They are involved in overseeing the school's systems for pay awards related to the performance of teaching staff and know how underperformance is tackled.

- Finances are managed well so that there are good levels of staffing and resources to support pupils' learning. This includes use of the pupil premium and the additional school sport and physical education funding.
- Equality of opportunity is given strong emphasis and governors ensure that the school meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' pride in their school is clearly evident in the way they are welcoming to visitors.
- The school is a harmonious community. Staff and pupils care for and relate very positively towards one another. These highly supportive relationships underpin pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are proud of their work and give of their best. For instance, they share ideas with one another in lessons and give helpful comments on each other's work. However, behaviour is not outstanding because, occasionally, a few pupils sometimes need reminders from staff to concentrate fully and to get on with their work.
- Pupils behave well around the school, moving sensibly within the school building. They are well mannered and open doors for visitors and talk eagerly about how they enjoy school.
- Pupils' behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is good because of the good range of equipment available to occupy them. This also helps to ensure that pupils' physical development is promoted effectively.
- Pupils undertake their various responsibilities well. For example, pupils enthusiastically and sensibly carry out daily tasks such as collecting registers and class fruit. Through weekly class forums they inform their teachers of any barriers to learning they have encountered and things that they have really enjoyed or have helped them to be successful learners. Older pupils also welcome opportunities to support younger pupils at lunchtimes.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Parents agree that their children are safe and happy when they are in school.
- Pupils say that school is a very safe place to be. They learn about how to keep themselves safe and are extremely clear about how to stay safe, including when using the internet.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the different forms that bullying can take and what to do if they encounter it. They say that there is no bullying in their school but if there was, they are very confident that staff would deal with it.
- There is excellent support for pupils who may be considered vulnerable because of their particular circumstances and pupils have ample opportunities to raise any concerns they may have.
- The breakfast clubs are popular. They provide a very safe and caring environment and an excellent start to the day for those who attend.
- Pupils arrive in time for school and their average and improving attendance is a measure of how much they enjoy school and of the school's effective monitoring and follow-up on pupil absence.

## The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is typically good. As a result, it helps pupils to make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than in the past.
- Teachers have high expectations for their pupils' progress and most pupils respond with positive attitudes to learning. This is particularly evident in pupils' enthusiasm for reading.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching are evident in the work seen in pupils' books. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the school. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing is improving rapidly. Pupils present their work very neatly.
- Support staff play a key role in helping pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs, to achieve well. They are deployed well in class and when taking small groups. All adults are trained well and are skillful in getting the best from the pupils they

support.

- Pupils work well cooperatively. They listen and value each other's opinions, for example, when studying newspaper reports in Year 6, to build up a 'toolkit' in preparation for writing their own reports.
- Reading skills and phonics (the sounds that letters represent) are taught well. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise these skills when completing comprehension and writing activities in guided reading sessions.
- Reading, writing and mathematics' skills are applied and extended effectively in other subjects. For example, pupils confidently use their writing skills to record science experiments. They use their reading skills to research historical facts for topic work.
- Teachers use effective questioning to encourage all pupils to think harder about complex ideas and issues. This leads to debates in class and pupils' improved communication skills. However, there are occasions when the most-able pupils are not sufficiently stretched, for example when applying skills already mastered in mathematics to more challenging work, especially when solving mathematical problems.
- A whole-school tracking system is in place. This sets clear measurable expectations by which pupils' progress is checked in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Marking in English books is very effective because it leaves pupils clear about their achievements and what they should improve. Pupils also have time to do their corrections. However, some teachers fail to check that pupils are applying their good advice in their future work. This can sometimes result in repeated errors and pupils' progress not being as good as it might be.
- The same high quality of marking is not as evident in other subjects because pupils are not consistently given all the guidance they need to improve further.
- Parents are pleased with the progress that their children are making. Teachers in all year groups regularly take the opportunity to reinforce learning with appropriate homework.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is good. As a result of good teaching, their progress is improving rapidly. Higher standards are evident in the school's records of pupils' developing skills and the work in their books.
- Children are given a good foundation for their education in the early years. Pupils reached standards which, at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics; from where they started their education, this represented good progress for these pupils.
- Inspection findings based on observations of pupils' learning and school records show increasing proportions of pupils exceeding expected levels of skill for their age because of more rapid progress. As a result, pupils, currently in Years 2 and 6 are on track to make at least good progress and achieve the national average or better in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' continuing eagerness to learn has resulted in sustained improvement since the start of this school year. Current pupils are making at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. While pupils' books and the work seen in lessons confirm this pattern, their progress in other subjects is not always as rigorously checked as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As a result of good and improved teaching that begins in Reception, pupils' attainment in the national screening check for their understanding of letters and the sounds they make was close to the national average in 2014. The recent screening check, of the current Year 1 pupils, shows that an above average proportion are meeting the required standard this year.
- Pupils continue to show a strong interest and enjoyment of reading, in all year groups. Daily reading activities help them to read fluently and with growing understanding of features beyond the text. Pupils say that reading helps them to be better writers.
- Pupils demonstrate increasingly secure basic skills in mathematics. Their mastery of mathematical concepts is improving strongly. This is because of a strong focus on the development of basic skills. However, opportunities to apply these skills in problem-solving activities are sometimes not challenging enough because teachers do not give pupils enough scope to make their own decisions about how to tackle these problems.
- The most-able pupils have not consistently achieved as well as they could, to reach the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is because they did not have enough opportunities to apply skills already mastered in writing and mathematics to more challenging work. A greater proportion of the most-able pupils are working at the higher levels in Year 2 and Year 6 this year.
- As a result of the effective use of additional government funding, disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, when compared to their

classmates, disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind in reading and writing and four terms behind in mathematics. When compared to other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were approximately four terms behind in mathematics, three terms behind in writing and one term behind in reading. While the progress they made was slightly less than similar pupils nationally in mathematics and writing, it was above average in reading. Currently, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics and any gaps in their attainment, when compared to other pupils, are closing as they move through the school.

- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good and current pupils are making good progress. This is a result of the quick and accurate identification of needs and work being well tailored to match their abilities and interests.

### The early years provision

is good

- Most children join the early years with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the early years from their individual starting points.
- In 2014, the majority of children achieved a good level of development from their starting points. This year, the proportion of children already meeting and exceeding the early learning goals is higher than in previous years, reflecting the improvements in the quality of provision and teaching.
- Children are well prepared to move into Year 1.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader has a well-informed view of children's achievement and checks the quality of teaching effectively. She ensures that the curriculum is appropriate, is planned to build on children's previous experiences and meets their interests well. Focused work with groups of children has ensured that the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children has closed this year. She has also risen to the challenge of successfully establishing the new Nursery.
- Indoor and outdoor provision is both safe and secure. The indoor and outdoor areas are exciting and vibrant, and provide children with a range of high quality learning opportunities which meet their needs well.
- Teaching is good and there are significant strengths in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults plan and organise activities which support the children in developing their skills securely. The quality of questioning and support provided to children while they work in groups and independently is very effective. There are plenty of opportunities for children to explore, create and think critically. Staff ensure the children develop their personal, social and emotional skills rapidly as they chat and work together.
- Children's communication and language skills and their mathematical skills are developed well. During the inspection, children were observed taking part with enthusiasm in activities linked to the story of 'The Bear Hunt', both inside the classroom and in the Forest School area. They used role play to re-enact the story. Children make very good progress in working with number and solving basic problems such as when measuring the ingredients to make bread.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and their behaviour is often outstanding.

## 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>	135985
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	456263

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Charles Woodd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ceri Baggus
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01285 658550
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