

Silver End Primary School

School Road, Silver End, Witham, CM8 3RZ

Inspection dates

1–2 July 2015

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.

- Pupils' achievement has risen significantly since the previous inspection. All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The executive headteacher provides inspiring leadership. Ably assisted by other leaders and governors, he has been successful in ensuring rapid improvements in teaching and achievement.
- The governing body knows the school well and supports and challenges the leadership team to ensure continued improvement in pupils' achievement.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. British values are taught through all aspects of the curriculum and pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. The positive climate for learning and well-planned activities capture the interests of pupils and motivate them to learn well.
- Pupils behave well. Their good manners and politeness help to make the school a welcoming place.
- Pupils are kept safe. Consequently, they feel well cared for and valued.
- Children in the early years benefit from a stimulating and well-planned learning environment and make good progress.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and are right to have high regard for it because of its considerable improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always set work that is suitably challenging, including for the most able, and progress slows.
- Marking does not consistently guide pupils in how to improve their work. Some teachers do not ensure that pupils respond to the advice given and learn from their mistakes.
- Occasionally, teachers do not support children in the early years effectively enough to extend their language skills.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, three of which were seen jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and observed small groups of pupils taught by teachers and teaching assistants. The inspectors also listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and five other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 37 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. They talked to parents as they brought their children into school.
- Inspectors considered the 55 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' books and at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress, the school's evaluation of its performance, school improvement planning, documentation relating to teachers' performance over time and records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Tusha Chakraborti, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kewal Goel	Additional Inspector
Brian Simber	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Silver End is an average-sized primary school.
- Children are taught full time in the Reception classes.
- Most pupils are White British. A very small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for disadvantaged pupils in local authority care and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of Year 6.
- The school is led by an executive headteacher who also runs another local primary school. The previous headteacher retired in July 2014. The executive headteacher provided support throughout the spring and summer terms in 2014 and, since September 2014, has worked at the school for four days a week. The school also experienced some further changes in staffing, including some senior leaders.
- The school works with the local primary and the secondary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their achievement further by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use their assessment of what pupils already know and understand to set work that stretches and challenges all abilities, including the most able
 - making sure that teachers consistently provide pupils with clear guidance in marking on what they need to do to improve their work so that they achieve higher standards
 - giving pupils opportunities to respond to the written guidance they receive from their teachers to improve their next pieces of work.
- Ensure that all children in the early years are supported effectively to extend their language skills further when they are doing different activities.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher's high expectations of staff and pupils have led to considerable improvements in teaching and pupils' rate of progress. He has been very ably assisted by leaders, managers and governors, who share his commitment to improving the school. Leaders have established a positive climate for learning, which ensures pupils' good behaviour and much improved teaching and achievement.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance. Systems for checking pupils' progress are very effective and confirm that all groups of pupils make good progress across the school.
- Senior leaders gather a wide range of evidence to evaluate teachers' performance and its impact on pupils' progress. They set challenging targets for teachers which are linked to pupils' progress and pay progression. Teachers are well supported to improve their expertise and practice through a very effective training programme. They benefit from working with their colleagues from the local primary and secondary schools by sharing good practice. Consequently, teaching is consistently good and pupils' achievement has risen.
- Middle leaders, including those for subjects, the early years and special educational needs, have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. They check teaching and learning through scrutiny of pupils' work and by analysing pupils' progress in their subjects. As a result, middle leaders have been well informed and able to direct improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils learn from a broad and varied range of subjects. The curriculum is planned effectively to provide pupils with interesting and engaging learning opportunities. Pupils have many opportunities to enhance their learning and skills through additional activities, events and sports clubs.
- The school successfully promotes British values of tolerance and mutual respect in daily life through the curriculum and assemblies. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for life in modern British society. Pupils develop a good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through a range of subjects, including religious studies, art and sporting activities. The school's links with a school in Kenya extend pupils' understanding of education and culture in a society different from their own.
- The primary school sport premium is used well. For example, the funding provides specialist coaches to extend the range of sporting activities for all pupils and to train staff to improve their expertise in sport. As a result, pupils gain in health and physical well-being, and almost all pupils participate in sport. Pupils thoroughly enjoy competing in inter-school sports events.
- Safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are fully applied. Consequently, pupils are safe and well cared for in school.
- The school uses pupil premium funding very effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Well-organised, additional support for eligible individuals enables these pupils to make good progress.
- Leaders are strongly committed to ensuring equal opportunity for all pupils. For example, the whole school focuses closely on raising the achievement of all pupils and tackling any discrimination. The additional support provided for disadvantaged pupils, and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, has ensured their rapid progress over the past year.
- The school works closely with the local authority, which has provided effective support in confirming the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' achievement. The school also works to good effect with other local schools in sharing skills and expertise. External help has contributed to better teaching and achievement across the school.
- The school works closely with parents, successfully supporting and involving them in their children's

learning. Some parents commented on the good support that they received from the school's family support workers.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is effective. It is committed to improving all aspects of the school's work. It has a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Governors scrutinise the information on progress and attainment to check how well pupils are achieving compared to national performance. They are well informed about the teaching quality by the headteacher and by their own monitoring visits to school. Governors suitably carry out their duties with regard to the management of teachers' performance and challenge any underperformance. They oversee the school's processes for pay and promotion and make sure that teachers are rewarded only when they raise pupils' achievement. Governors ask probing questions about pupils' performance and support and challenge leaders effectively. The governing body appropriately monitors how the school is spending additional funding and the impact this has on pupils' achievement. It is well supported in its analysis of the use of funding by the business manager. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. One said, 'I am glad to come to school and learn new things.' They work well together, readily discussing their ideas and sharing resources.
- Pupils respect school rules. They respond well to the helpful procedures which guide adults to manage behaviour.
- Pupils thrive in the school's harmonious environment, where everyone is valued and respected. Consequently, they grow up as mature and confident learners.
- Pupils show initiative and are keen to take on responsibilities. For example, they decide democratically how to spend the money raised from their tuck shop to improve the school's learning facilities. They value their links with a school in Kenya and write to the pupils of that school about life at Silver End Primary. Girls in Years 5 and 6 run a writing club, enter national writing competitions and have had their writings published alongside that of pupils from other local schools.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is average. This improvement has followed effective action by the school to reward good attendance and follow up poor attendance rigorously, particularly individuals who have been persistently absent.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- All staff are rigorously checked for their suitability to work with pupils prior to appointment. The building is kept secure and entry is well controlled.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school at all times. The vast majority of parents who responded to the parental questionnaire and talked and wrote to the inspectors during the inspection confirm that their children are safe in school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. These matters are closely considered and discussed in assemblies and in lessons. Pupils are able to explain the dangers of the misuse of the internet, social networking sites and drugs.
- Pupils are well aware of the different forms bullying can take. They say that it is rare in school. They are confident that any incidents of bullying will be dealt with quickly by teachers and other adults.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- The quality of teaching has greatly improved. Teachers have enhanced their expertise through a very effective training programme over the past year. All have benefited from this programme and have become more able to ensure pupils make good progress and achieve better standards.
- Excellent relationships between adults and pupils contribute to successful learning throughout the school. Staff create a purposeful learning environment. Adults treat pupils with respect and are interested in what they have to say. As a result, pupils respond readily to tasks with interest and enthusiasm and make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, which helps them to plan activities that make learning interesting and engaging. Most teachers ask searching questions which enable them to assess pupils' progress accurately, extend their knowledge and deepen their understanding.
- The work that teachers provide usually stretches and challenges all groups of pupils. However, not all teachers use the assessment information showing pupils' progress and attainment effectively enough to make work challenging for all groups, including the most able. As a result, occasionally, some pupils are not stretched enough to make rapid progress and reach higher standards.
- Teachers are effective in helping pupils to develop reading skills. Phonics (letters and corresponding sounds) is taught well in the early years and in Key Stage 1. Effective teaching helps pupils to become fluent readers and make rapid progress in reading across the school. Teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 promote stimulating discussions on different styles of writing by different authors so pupils gain more understanding of what they read.
- Writing is well taught. Teachers encourage and assist pupils to edit and improve their writing by choosing the right words for effect and meaning. For example, a teacher of a class of Years 1 and 2 pupils enabled them to improve a paragraph by making them choose suitable adjectives and different types of sentence, which they accomplished very well.
- In mathematics, teachers help pupils to develop their calculation and problem-solving skills successfully. Good teaching ensures that pupils' mathematical skills are consolidated and suitably extended through regular practice.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with teachers and provide good support to disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds who need extra help are also supported effectively within the class. As a result of the individual help provided, all these pupils are making good progress.
- In most classes, teachers mark pupils' work regularly. They usually give clear guidance about how well pupils are doing and how they can move forward to the next stage in their learning. However, in some classes, the guidance from marking is not helpful enough to enable pupils to know how to improve their work. Pupils are not always required to respond to teachers' guidance and correct their work. As a result, they repeat their mistakes and do not make the progress that they could.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- Pupils' achievement has improved significantly since the previous inspection. From their various starting points, all groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Observations of learning during the inspection, pupils' work and the school's own assessments show that pupils have made much faster progress over the past two years in all subjects across the school. Currently, Year 6 pupils are making good progress, greatly exceeding the rates of progress made in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014.

- Pupils are making much better progress and attaining higher standards than those shown in the published data describing previous results. Leaders have taken effective action to improve teaching. Consequently, pupils' progress and attainment have improved significantly and are well ahead of what was achieved in 2014. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning have also contributed to their better achievement.
- In 2014, at the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attained standards that were in line with the national averages in reading and mathematics but below in writing. The school has acted decisively and introduced very effective strategies to improve writing over the past year. This has resulted in pupils making much faster progress in writing. The proportion of pupils shown in the school's thorough assessment to be on track to attain the higher National Curriculum Level 5 and above in Year 6 is above the 2014 national average in writing, as well as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils in Year 1 apply their knowledge of phonics (letters and sounds) accurately to their reading and writing. In 2014, they attained standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check slightly above the expected standard. Pupils' phonic skills have improved further since then.
- The most-able pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. For example, they analyse different styles of writing by well-known authors with confidence and compose good quality pieces of their own in similar styles. Their writing reveals an extended, well-chosen vocabulary. In mathematics, the most able use calculations and solve difficult problems with confidence and skill. However, occasionally, not all of them achieve as well as they could because teachers do not provide work that fully challenges them.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress from their different starting points. They are successful because leaders have improved the support system for these pupils to meet their learning needs effectively.
- There is no difference between the progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups and that of others. All make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. They currently attain standards at least in line with those of their classmates and often better. Their success is due to good teaching and effective one-to-one support for them in each class.
- In 2014, the attainment of Year 6 disadvantaged pupils was one and half terms behind that of their classmates in reading, three terms in writing and half a term in mathematics. Compared with other pupils nationally, they were about a two and half terms behind in reading, five and half terms in writing and similar to others in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows these gaps in attainment have narrowed significantly in the current year in all subjects, especially in writing.

The early years provision

is good

- Leadership in the early years is good. The leader, supported by other staff, ensures that children grow up in a welcoming and safe learning environment. By the end of the Reception Year, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children enter Reception with skills that are below those typical for their age, especially in communication and language development. Good teaching and stimulating resources accelerate their progress markedly. As a result, the proportion of children currently reaching a good level of development is above the most recent national average.
- Teaching is good over time. A stimulating range of engaging learning resources and activities are used to capture children's imagination. Most children quickly engage in a range of interesting indoor and outdoor activities both of their own choosing and those initiated by adults. However, occasionally, adults do not support children sufficiently to extend their language skills in the different activities they choose individually. Some are left on their own and their language skills are not enhanced as well as they could be.

- Children behave well. They have formed excellent relationships with teachers and teaching assistants. They are keen to read to adults and narrate stories from picture books of their own choice. They listen carefully, support one another and take on simple responsibilities, such as tidying up.
- Phonics is taught regularly and effectively and ensures that children develop their reading and writing skills well. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are well integrated and benefit from good support from skilled teaching assistants.
- Staff work well with parents and keep open all lines of communication. Consequently, the children get off to a good start at school. The staff ensure that children's health, safety and well-being are always of utmost importance. They successfully provide children with an enjoyable, safe and secure learning environment. All parents consulted at the start of the day during the inspection expressed the view that their children were safe and secure in school at all times. Inspection findings confirmed these views.

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	114828
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	462109

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	291
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Goldsmith
Headteacher	Stewart Caplen (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2013
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