

Shefford C.E. Primary School

Wantage Road, Great Shefford, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 7DB

Inspection dates

26–27 April 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher sets the highest expectations for all. Leaders and staff are determined to achieve the best for all pupils.
- Teaching is typically good and the school has improved considerably since the last inspection. Staff constantly strive to improve.
- Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use it well.
- Teachers provide tailored support for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, this small group of pupils achieve well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high-quality additional teaching. This ensures that they make good progress from their starting points.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It captures pupils' interest and creates enthusiasm for learning across a range of subjects. The school successfully promotes British values and pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- Equality is promoted effectively. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to understand and respect people's differences.
- The attention given to pupils' welfare and personal development is a strength of the school. Parents and families value the wrap-around care that school staff provide.
- Children in the early years make good progress. The early years leader ensures that staff use their strong knowledge of individual pupils' needs well to plan appropriate next learning steps.
- Pupils' behaviour is good because staff have high expectations of them. Mostly, they conduct themselves well in class and at play.
- Middle leaders and governors have benefited from training and made important changes to the way they work. However, not all leaders and governors are able to demonstrate the impact of their work on pupils' achievement.
- The most able pupils achieve well. Nevertheless, leaders rightly recognise that they can increase the proportion of pupils that reach the higher standards across the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants play an important part in helping pupils learn, although the support they provide is not consistently of high quality across the team.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that all leaders and governors can demonstrate the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes.
- Further increase pupils' achievement across the curriculum so that it is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - the proportion of pupils who exceed the standards expected for their age increases across the school
 - teaching assistants provide support for pupils' learning that is consistently as good as the best.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since taking up post, the new headteacher has brought renewed vigour and enthusiasm to the staff and governors at Shefford. She quickly and skilfully put in place actions to drive swift improvements to secure better outcomes for pupils. Staff and governors united under her leadership and supported her well in delivering immediate, successful change. As a result of the determined and enthusiastic actions of leaders and staff, the school has improved considerably since the last inspection.
- Senior leaders provide ongoing training and support for all staff. Teaching and learning has improved because staff are committed to strengthening their own practice. Leaders ensure that performance management is closely linked to pupils' outcomes. As such, staff are held to account effectively and teaching is good.
- All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Recent actions taken by the headteacher, and effectively upheld by all staff, ensure that pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is typically good. Incidents of bullying and disruptive behaviour are rare. Consequently, Shefford is a calm and industrious learning community.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. Leaders make good use of the pupil premium to ensure that pupils receive the support they need to learn well. The range of support for disadvantaged pupils typically includes additional teaching, one-to-one mentoring, and support to access extra-curricular activities and educational visits.
- Leaders pay close attention to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure that suitable support is delivered by teachers or well-trained teaching assistants through the judicious use of additional funding. As a result, this group of pupils achieves well.
- The school curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects and learn well in challenging and interesting lessons. Learning is frequently linked with themes and topics that enthuse pupils and spark their interest. For example, pupils were keen to share the work they recently completed in science when learning about space.
- Leaders provide good opportunities for pupils to develop a growing appreciation of British values and develop effective social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. For example, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils had recently been considering the consequences of war whilst learning about the First World War. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain because staff enable them to reflect successfully upon what is morally right and wrong.
- Equality is promoted well. All staff are resolute to ensure that no one is ever discriminated against unfairly. All pupils are enabled to participate fully in all areas of school life and they achieve well as a result.
- Leaders provide a suitably wide variety of sporting activities for pupils. Sports premium funding is used well. Specialist coaches provide high-quality teaching, as well as a range of additional extra-curricular clubs and competitive matches and competitions. This ensures that pupils take part in sports regularly and are inspired to be fit and

active.

- Middle leaders support the work of the headteacher well. They have benefited from recent training that has helped them to lead their areas of responsibility more effectively. As a result, the impact they have on aspects of the school such as improving the teaching of mathematics, the early years outdoor area and phonics is growing. That said, not all leaders are able to explain the impact of their work on pupils' achievements.
- Parents hold the school in high regard. They particularly appreciate the increased range of sporting activities, the nurturing environment, and the close and caring attention of the staff. As one stated, 'The school is bursting with life, love and laughter.'
- The local authority have provided strong support for the school's leadership team. They have assisted the headteacher to monitor and evaluate ongoing school improvement. As a result, outcomes for pupils have improved rapidly over time.
- The diocese has worked closely with leaders to support them to evaluate successfully the school's strengths and weaknesses. The self-review work completed on governance has been particularly effective. Consequently, the governing body is more able than previously to hold leaders to account.

Governance of the school

- Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They take time to visit the school and have high aspirations for all pupils. They oversee the financial management of the school, with good effect. For example, they can demonstrate that the pupil premium and additional sports funding is spent wisely.
- Governors make good use of expertise from the diocese and the local authority. They use this support to improve their own practice, and to ensure that their judgments of the school are increasingly accurate. Consequently, governance has improved since the last inspection. However, governors are not yet confident in assessing the impact that leaders' actions are having on pupils' outcomes. Governors do not monitor leaders' work against the school's development plan effectively enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's work and there is a high regard for their safeguarding. Staff work closely with parents and pupils to provide high-quality care and support. Where appropriate, leaders work well with other outside agencies. Leaders will challenge other safeguarding professionals to improve the standard of care provided to pupils when necessary.
- Leaders keep high-quality records, showing the chronology of any concerns raised about pupils' welfare. When recruiting new staff, appropriate background checks are made. Robust systems ensure that all adults in school are suitable to work with children and take the right actions to keep children safe.

- Staff receive regular, up-to-date training regarding safeguarding. They know what to do to raise any concerns and share important information to keep pupils safe. Everyone is fully aware of their responsibilities and knows how to act in the best interests of pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan learning that typically ensures that pupils learn well across a range of subjects. For example, in an English lesson the teacher demonstrated to pupils how to construct an effectively sequenced bulleted list. The teacher's clear explanations enabled most pupils to master this more challenging aspect of grammatical writing.
- Throughout the school, pupils typically achieve well in mathematics. Pupils, including the most able, are challenged appropriately with suitably difficult work. For example, pupils choose additional activities that are graded as 'mild', 'hot' and 'spicy', depending upon the level of difficulty. Pupils enjoy these extra tasks that encourage them to grapple with more complex mathematics.
- Work in pupils' exercise books shows that they write in a range of styles and subjects. As a result, pupils are achieving well in their writing. For example, in Year 4 pupils carefully wrote up an experiment which they had recently completed. They accurately recorded how the temperature of water affects the rate at which sugar dissolves.
- Pupils typically read well. They participate enthusiastically in the school's reading challenge, which encourages them to read regularly at home and in school. Pupils read with appropriate fluency for their age and are able to infer the meaning of challenging words. For example, a group of mixed-age pupils successfully concluded that 'palatial' meant 'like a palace'.
- Pupils rise to the demanding expectations set by staff. This is particularly evident in the good quality of presentation seen in the vast majority of pupils' exercise books. Pupils are proud of their work. They do their very best to meet the high standards that staff insist upon.
- Teaching assistants usually support pupils' learning well; for example, by using skilful questioning to help pupils summarise a chapter of a book. However, occasionally this assistance is less successful than usual in supporting pupils' learning effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic ambassadors for their school. They take pride in the recent improvements which they have contributed to. Pupils enjoy the extra responsibilities that they take on such as friendship monitors, prefects and house captains. They participate well in 'pupil voice' activities that enable them to champion changes that they want to happen. For example, in representing the views of other pupils they are

keen to develop the school's approach to homework.

- Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to learn about safety. For example, they understand that outside doors at school must always be closed. They learn about keeping safe online. Pupils talked with confidence about a recent visit from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and could recite the Childline telephone number from memory. Pupils and parents are confident that the school helps to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They understand the consequences of poor behaviour and know that staff will act swiftly, firmly and fairly to manage it if it arises. As a result of these raised expectations, pupils are confident that Shefford is a friendlier and happier school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance, including for those pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is above the national average. Leaders have worked diligently with parents to provide support and instil high expectations to ensure that most pupils attend school regularly. For example, rewards and certificates are in place to inspire pupils to achieve exceptionally high rates of attendance.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school, both at break and at lunchtimes. They enjoy each other's company and talk and play together good-naturedly. For example, one pupil expressed pleasure in the fact that Chaddleworth School was now on the same site, as it brought all their friends together.
- Pupils usually participate well in their learning. They contribute to discussions appropriately and pay attention to adults and fellow pupils alike. Occasionally, if adults do not consistently demand high expectations of pupils' behaviour, some pupils lose focus and behave less well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In all year groups, pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' exercise books and other performance information show that they make similarly effective progress throughout the curriculum. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to ensure that pupils learn well.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported well to make good progress. The pupil premium is used carefully to diminish the differences between disadvantaged pupils' progress and the progress of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate support to make good progress from their starting points.
- Boys and girls achieve similarly across a range of subjects including reading, writing, and mathematics, and grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Last year, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 was below the national average. As a result of successful changes to the

curriculum, current pupils are making much better progress and greater numbers of pupils are achieving the expected standard for their age.

- The small number of most-able pupils identified by the school typically achieve well in a range of subjects. These pupils make good progress. Leaders are rightly ambitious to ensure that a greater proportion of most-able pupils exceed expectations for their age.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children in the Reception Year make good progress, including those who have starting points below those typical for their age. This is because staff know the children's different needs well and work together to put in place the appropriate next steps for their learning.
- The early years leader is ambitious for all children to achieve well. She has ensured that all staff have suitable training to ensure that children are well-placed to achieve effectively. For example, she has recently trained staff in the effective teaching of phonics. This has ensured that children's early reading skills are improving.
- Strong relationships between the school and parents are in place. Before starting at Shefford, the early years leader takes time to visit children both at home and at their pre-school. This ensures that children are confident about starting school, and parents are able to support their children to make the best possible start to their learning.
- A strong emphasis on language development is evident throughout the early years provision. Staff provide frequent opportunities to engage pupils' interest and stimulate conversation. One child keenly explained the thorough process of making a blackcurrant-squash drink as she played with coloured water in the outside kitchen.
- Children behave very well in the early years and learn effectively about keeping safe. For example, one child expressed the importance of not picking up broken glass in the park 'in case you cut yourself'.

School details

Unique reference number	109975
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10024505

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	27
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Mary Harwood
Headteacher	Bridget Goodrich
Telephone number	01488 648657
Website	csf.w-berks.sch.uk/westberks/primary/csf
Email address	office@csf.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 January 2015

Information about this school

- Shefford is a small school that is well below the average size of a primary school. The school is part of a hard federation with Chaddleworth St Andrew's Church of England Primary School. Both schools share the same headteacher, staff and governing body.
- In April 2016, both schools moved onto the same school site and began working fully as one school.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average.
- In all year groups, there are very few pupils. In some year groups there is only one or two pupils. This means that it is not possible to report on the achievement of some

groups of pupils without identifying individuals.

- In 2016, there were too few pupils in Year 6 to report on the government's floor standards which set the minimum standards for the progress and attainment of pupils.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place at the same time as the inspection of the other school in the federation, Chaddleworth St Andrew's Church of England Primary School.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes and looked at pupils' exercise books across a range of subjects. Several observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, a group of pupils, four members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Oxford.
- The inspector spoke to parents on the playground and took into account two responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- A range of documents was examined including the school's information about pupils' achievement and records concerning pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety.
- The inspector held discussions and considered evidence with the inspector of Chaddleworth St Andrew's Church of England Primary School.

Inspection team

Dom Cook, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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