

# Charlton Church of England Primary School

Barton Road, Dover, Kent CT16 2LX

## Inspection dates

20–21 February 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Throughout the school, there is a very strong emphasis on cooperation and teamwork. This is evident among the adults and the pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together so that teaching is good and pupils enjoy an interesting and rich curriculum.
- Children benefit from a strong start in Reception and are ready for key stage 1. Similarly, older pupils are well prepared for their move into secondary education.
- Pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are steadily improving over time and across the school. The quality and presentation of pupils' writing is particularly strong and they rightly demonstrate tremendous pride in their work.
- Last year, pupils' achievement in mathematics was below average at the end of key stage 2 and not enough pupils achieved the higher level. These aspects are priorities for improvement this year. Current achievement in mathematics, including for the most able, is improving rapidly.
- In some age groups, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is not as good as other pupils in the school.
- Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes. They are keen to learn, take responsibility and help to make sure everyone achieves as well as possible. Nonetheless, too many pupils take time off school and attendance has been below average for the last two years.
- Senior leaders, and in particular the acting headteacher, have enthusiastically and effectively taken up the reins during the absence of the headteacher.
- Leaders accurately identify priorities for improvement. Systems to analyse and evaluate the impact of actions taken to improve are not well developed.
- The school is outward looking and works well with other schools. There is a strong and successful approach to improving the skills, knowledge and performance of all staff.

## **Full report**

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

- Increase the rate of progress and the attainment of disadvantaged pupils so that they achieve as well as the others.
- Sharpen improvement planning and strengthen the systems to analyse the impact of actions in order to evaluate what is working well and what further changes are necessary.
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with national averages.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have created a culture of mutual respect, teamwork and cohesion. They act in a way that is true to the school's values. This permeates throughout the whole school, in classes, during assemblies, at lunchtimes and during playtimes. Leaders act quickly to provide challenge and support or to tackle any type of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour. As a result, pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development are strong and pupils demonstrate a good understanding of school and British values.
- Staff are all proud to belong to the school and believe that leaders are motivating, have high aspirations and support them to do well. Leaders have managed effectively the recent changes in staffing. Extensive induction has been put in place for new staff. Staff at all levels benefit from a wide range of training opportunities that are well matched to individual needs and interests. Monitoring by leaders is sharply focused and the positive impact of follow-up support for new members of staff is very evident.
- The school curriculum is broad, interesting and enriched through interesting trips and visits. There is a strong emphasis on making the learning purposeful and relevant. The primary physical education and sport premium funding is used well to broaden experiences and participation. There is a wide range of after-school clubs with high numbers participating throughout the age groups.
- Leaders check regularly and carefully gather information about pupils' progress and attainment so they know how well different groups and individual pupils are achieving in reading, writing and mathematics. The teachers work with colleagues in Aquila schools and other local schools to share expertise and also to check that their expectations are accurate. The multi-academy trust provides appropriate support, advice and challenge.
- The additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils is carefully managed. The acting headteacher has a very clear understanding of the needs, strategies and actions which are currently being taken. She is very aware that the progress and attainment of this group lag behind those of other pupils in some age groups and that more needs to be done to address these gaps.
- When leaders identify weaknesses, they act decisively and effectively. For example, they are clearly tackling the weakness in mathematics, including the achievement of the most able pupils. Throughout the school, there is evidence of greater challenge and improvement. However, although the current school improvement plan identifies most of the correct priorities, the plan is not sharply focused. There is no clear strategy or timescale to show how and when leaders, including governors, will evaluate the impact of the actions taken or be able to tell whether actions are bringing about sufficient improvement.
- Relationships with some parents and carers have been difficult in the past and this is evident in the responses to the online Parent View survey. The majority of parents' responses are positive and this proportion is improving rapidly. Leaders have taken action to improve communication and engagement with parents. Parents welcome the greater opportunities to be involved and commented on how communications have

improved this year.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have a broad range of skills, enthusiasm and commitment. They carry out their responsibilities assiduously, particularly in relation to safeguarding. They have provided important support to the school during some difficult times.
- They meet regularly and receive and question information about how well pupils and groups of pupils are achieving. There have been some recent changes and several new governors have joined the governing body. They have sought out training and support from Aquila and are developing their monitoring role.
- Governors know the key priorities for improvement and are aware of actions taken to address weaknesses, strengthen leadership and develop new staff. However, their role in evaluating the effectiveness of action taken to tackle the priorities in the school's improvement plan is less clear.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils, staff and parents are all confident that pupils are safe, happy and well looked after in school.
- The acting headteacher moved swiftly during the autumn term to strengthen the expertise in the school. As a result, three senior leaders have undertaken the enhanced training to become designated safeguarding leads.
- Effective checks, systems, routines and records are rigorously carried out to keep pupils safe. All staff are trained and kept fully up to date with safeguarding requirements.
- Pupils understand safeguarding issues, such as dangers of extremism and using the internet safely.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers have high expectations for pupils in terms of working independently, persevering and enjoying a challenge. There is strong cohesion between teachers and teaching assistants, good teamwork and consistent approaches. Teaching assistants provide valuable support.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Right from the start, the younger pupils quickly gain valuable skills to help them read and write simple words and sentences. Teachers then build on this so that pupils develop a good understanding of texts. They ask probing questions to make pupils think carefully about their reading. Pupils can explain their ideas and challenge each other's views and opinions by referring to the text.
- The teaching of writing is a strength of the school, with pupils demonstrating advanced composition and technical skills. Opportunities to write are purposeful and meaningful, such as writing letters to celebrities. Teachers think of interesting activities to spark pupils' imagination and their willingness to write. For example, activities including

dressing-up events, 'quidditch' and drama resulted in some high-quality writing about Harry Potter.

- Teachers are alert during lessons to spot when pupils are finding something a little tricky or when they need more of a challenge. They ask thought-provoking questions which skilfully prompt and encourage pupils to discuss their findings and explain their thinking. For example, in mathematics, pupils are asked to explain their working and to prove their mathematical ideas and answers. In the pupils' survey, almost all pupils said that they were really pushed to do well.
- Sometimes, teachers do not provide sufficient practical resources to support pupils when new concepts are being introduced. The mathematics leader has identified this through her monitoring and is rightly encouraging more use of practical resources in mathematics to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Some well-planned learning means pupils develop a depth of knowledge across different subjects. There are good examples of pupils collaborating and taking responsibility for their own learning, particularly in the older classes. Year 6 pupils have completed some interesting factual writing related to their current topic on mountains and volcanoes. They worked well in groups to produce presentations about volcanoes, using art, information and communication technology (ICT) and information texts.
- However, there is some variability in the quantity and quality of pupils' application of literacy and mathematics skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. In some classes pupils are too often required to complete unchallenging tables and worksheets. These limit both pupils' learning in different subjects and their ability to use and apply their English and mathematics skills. Leaders have already picked this up from their monitoring and are working to improve the quality of opportunities in all classes.
- Adults create stimulating and supportive environments and a positive atmosphere. The school corridors and classrooms are full of pupils' high-quality work in different subjects, including personal, social and emotional education, as well as materials to support pupils' learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's strong ethos and sense of values are evident in practice. Teamwork and cohesion are strong features and relationships are warm. Adults share high expectations and encourage pupils to behave well, try hard and enjoy success. Pupils of all ages show independence and take responsibility for their learning.
- Pupils are keen to join in with activities, including assemblies and role play. They contribute thoughtfully and responsibly. Adults are highly effective in drawing out pupils' thoughts and deepening their understanding.
- Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school and readily take on responsibilities, such as the Year 6 enterprise activities. They understand the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles and are currently making and selling healthy

smoothies. The 'sports crew' are positive role models and contribute well to the smooth running of playtime activities with younger pupils.

- Pupils enjoy being in school and speak highly of their teachers. They feel listened to and feel their views are respected. All of those who responded to the online survey and pupils spoken to during the inspection feel confident that, if they have a worry, there is an adult they can trust who will help.
- The school provides effective support for pupils who find school difficult for whatever reason. There is valuable additional support, such as play therapy and emotional support. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities feel included in learning because tasks and support are set at an appropriate level.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are friendly, curious and courteous. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and encourage other pupils to behave appropriately. They listen carefully to, and are respectful of, others' opinions, even if they disagree with them.
- On the playground, they join in the many well-organised, different activities and no one is left out. Pupils are keen to participate in lessons and also in assemblies. This is evident in the very enthusiastic, joyful singing.
- Pupils usually behave very well in lessons, responding quickly to routines and adults' requests. Occasionally, when pupils find the work too hard or confusing, they lose concentration.
- Punctuality is improving as a result of recent actions taken by school leaders. Attendance has been below the national average for the past two years. The proportion of pupils who took a lot of time off was very high in the past but there was a significant improvement last year. So far this year, although attendance is improving, it is still only just closing the gap on the national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising throughout the school. Last year, almost all outcomes at each national assessment point were above the national averages. For example, pupils' achievements were above the national averages at the end of Reception, in the Year 1 phonics check, in all of the end of key stage 1 assessment tests and the end of key stage 2 assessment tests in reading and writing.
- The most able pupils in Year 2 also achieved better than the national average and mathematics was particularly strong. The younger boys do not achieve as well as the girls, particularly in literacy, but they catch up during their time in Charlton.
- Pupils are able to use their good phonics skills to help them with their reading and writing. They build on those basic skills and develop good comprehension skills. Older pupils are confident readers who can explain their understanding of texts. They can empathise with characters and give reasoned arguments to explain their understanding. They are able to analyse an author's style and vocabulary choices.
- Unlike all the other outcomes across the school last year, pupils' achievement in

mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was below average, at both the expected and the higher levels. The rate of pupils' progress in mathematics was also below average.

- The mathematics subject leader identified during the last academic year that pupils across the school were doing less well in mathematics than they were in other subjects. She set in motion a concerted plan to address this weakness involving all staff. This work is clearly paying off with pupils currently in the school but did not happen soon enough to address the gaps in learning of the very oldest pupils last year.
- Current pupils' books and the Aquila assessment information show that pupils, including the most able, are achieving well and making good progress in mathematics, as well as in reading and writing. They are keen to complete the challenges set for them. There is good evidence in most classes of opportunities for problem solving and reasoning, although sometimes pupils do not complete the explanation and reasoning part of these challenges.
- Disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 last year achieved relatively well, both in relation to pupils nationally and to other pupils in the school. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieved relatively well in reading and writing compared with national averages. However, their progress throughout key stage 2 was slower than other pupils'. There remain some gaps in both skills and rates of progress for these pupils across different age groups.
- The quality of writing across the school is high, with pupils using sophisticated writing techniques and vocabulary to engage their audience. For example, they understand the use of a good starter sentence to hook their readers, such as: 'I am confused. My day started the same as any other until the church bells rang,' or, 'What a week we've just had!' When given the opportunity, they write well in different subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. Their handwriting is lovely and the presentation shows that they clearly take pride in their work.
- Pupils achieve well in different subjects, such as art, music and physical education. The evidence of their achievements in these is celebrated throughout the school. Older pupils demonstrate well-developed research skills.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Children are confident, inquisitive and enjoy their learning. They arrive in Reception with skills which are broadly average and they make good progress from their different starting points.
- Relationships between adults are strong and these are mirrored by the pupils, resulting in effective teamwork and a positive, purposeful atmosphere. Safeguarding is effective and routines consistent so that children feel secure and happy.
- Staff are proud of their children and teach with enthusiasm and passion. The adults provide an interesting and imaginative range of activities so that children are engaged and concentrate well. Adults provide timely support and prompt children to deepen their learning.
- The learning environment is an interesting, well-organised, exciting place. Children know their way round and can easily make their own choices and find the resources they need. The outdoor space is used well to provide children with extended learning

opportunities. Children are creative. During the inspection, they enjoyed the stimulation of the treasure map and taking a journey in their pirate ship. Children were engrossed in customising their pirate ships and including features such as a compass.

- The teaching of phonics is very effective. Children can read all their initial sounds, some digraphs and are able to form words and simple sentences. There are opportunities for writing, both inside and out, which children take advantage of. For example, their treasure maps were carefully drawn and labelled. Children's writing is at the expected level for their age.
- Standards in mathematics are also at the level expected for their age. Children confidently practise using numbers to 20 in their discovery time, independently replicating a numbers game modelled earlier by the teacher. However, there is some misuse of terminology when children use 'before', 'after' or 'next to' rather than 'more' or 'less than'. There is more scope to challenge the most able children.
- Children are mostly attentive and interested during whole-class sessions. However, at times, these sessions are rather long and some children who quietly disengage are not spotted.
- The early years leader understands the importance of involving parents in the children's education. The children's learning journals show evidence of parents contributing 'wow moments' so that children's achievements outside school are shared and celebrated.
- Leaders gather a wealth of information about children's skills and abilities. This is used well to plan engaging day-to-day learning. However, it is less clear how the information is used strategically to ensure that any trends or weaknesses are thoroughly addressed over time.



## School details

Unique reference number	141659
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10040902

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the local governing body	Hazel Groves
Headteacher	Kim Werth
Telephone number	01304 201275
Website	<a href="http://www.charlton.kent.sch.uk/">www.charlton.kent.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:fiona.milne@charlton.kent.sch.uk">fiona.milne@charlton.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Charlton is situated in Dover, Kent. It is an average-sized primary school with one class in each year group.
- The headteacher is absent due to ill health. The deputy headteacher is acting headteacher, and the early years leader is acting deputy headteacher. Two other leaders have enhanced responsibilities and have recently become part of the senior leadership team.
- Most pupils are White British, with a small number of pupils from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is small but growing.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for additional government funding through the pupil premium is just below the national average. This additional funding is for pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities,

including those with an education, health and care plan, is broadly average.

- The school is a sponsored academy and is a member of Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust. The trust provides overarching school improvement support and governance. It delegates responsibility for the leadership and management of individual schools to a local governing body. The school also works with a collaboration of other local schools.
- In 2017, the school met the government's floor standards (minimum standards for pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 2).

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes on both days, spoke to pupils, looked at work in their books, and heard them read. Some observations were conducted jointly with the acting headteacher.
- Inspectors attended an assembly, had lunch with pupils in the dining hall and spent time outside at playtime.
- Meetings were held with leaders and staff, pupils, two members of the governing body, a representative from the trust board and the chief executive officer of Aquila, the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors spoke to parents on the playground and took into account the 61 responses, including written comments, to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of 20 staff responses and 25 pupil responses to the online questionnaires.
- A range of documents were reviewed, including the school's improvement plan and leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness, information about pupils' achievement, staff support, training and development records, governing body records, and information concerning pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety.

## Inspection team

Sheena MacDonald, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Tait	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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