

Culham Parochial Church of England Primary School

High Street, Culham, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 4NB

Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school is definitely improving. However, a legacy of underachievement is still evident for the older pupils. By the end of Year 6, achievement is below that of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils do not make strong enough progress in mathematics. This is because they are not given enough opportunities to practise their skills across different subjects.
- The development of mathematical reasoning is not as strong as other aspects of mathematics.
- Some pupils have too many absences, which affects the consistency of their progress.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to ensure all pupils achieve well. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve vary too widely. This hinders pupils' progress.
- Middle leaders have too little influence on improving the quality of teaching across the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and governors are ambitious for the school. They are clear about what remains to be done to improve the school's effectiveness.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel valued, safe and secure.
- Staff are proud to be part of the school community. They work well together.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils in Year 1 have good reading skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of different religions, cultures and British values.
- Leaders have been persistent in their commitment to place the well-being of all pupils at the heart of this inclusive school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes so they are consistently good or better, by:
 - ensuring that all teaching challenges pupils to achieve as well as they can
 - developing pupils' skills in mathematics to deepen their understanding and mastery of concepts
 - promoting pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills more effectively.
- Ensure that middle leaders have a greater influence on improving teaching so that it is consistently good across the school.
- Continue to work closely with the families of those pupils with the most absence to improve their attendance levels.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since her appointment, the executive headteacher has skilfully brought everyone together as a team with a shared vision for success. Staff are enthusiastic and reflect the energy of the senior team's determination to improve. All staff have a clear understanding of the school's goals. Staff feel well supported in working in the school.
- Leaders are accurate in their monitoring of teaching and provide the right level of challenge, training and support to teaching staff. They are fully aware that while teaching is improving, it is not consistently good. Members of staff appreciate the training they have received and are keen to develop professionally.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. School development planning is effective. It enables school leaders to prioritise and act on aspects that require urgent attention.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders are developing a curriculum that gives pupils good opportunities to apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Educational visits, visitors to the school and extra-curricular activities further enhance the curriculum. Pupils' learning is further developed through music, art and outdoor learning. For example, pupils spoke about their 'forest school' (where activities are often taught in the outdoor environment) with great enthusiasm.
- There is a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to respect others and appreciate diversity. For example, the school takes positive steps to widen pupils' understanding of different religions and cultures. The school is a happy, friendly and welcoming community.
- There is a clear commitment to equality and ensuring that there is no discrimination. All pupils, whatever their ability, background or beliefs, have the opportunity to take part in the school's activities.
- The school promotes pupils' understanding of British values effectively. Leaders foster the principles of democracy. For example, elections are held to select members of the school council. The school's key values such as respect, truthfulness and humility encourage pupils to understand and display these qualities in and around the school. Leaders make sure that all pupils are valued, and mutual respect and tolerance are strong features of the school.
- There have been a number of changes in leadership roles. This is not due to lack of action but a result of staff turnaround and a restructure of responsibilities across the federation. The federation's middle leaders have considerable expertise in, and enthusiasm for, the areas for which they are responsible. They are receiving the right support to build teachers' skills and confidence. However, their influence on improving the quality of teaching is, to date, variable, particularly at key stage 2.
- The school uses pupil premium funding effectively. The careful monitoring of the progress of disadvantaged pupils shows that, overall, the funding is having a positive impact on pupils' rates of progress.
- The additional funding to promote physical education (PE) and sport is well spent. It is

used to provide sports coaching staff and increase pupils' participation in sporting activities. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the range of sports they enjoy, for example American football and dodgeball.

- Parents and carers appreciate the quality of care shown by staff and the variety of methods used to help to develop the confidence of the pupils. One parent said: 'This small school provides a great friendly learning environment. Each child is encouraged to progress with a caring approach.' The school has a good relationship with the local authority and diocese. Leaders have benefited from well-targeted challenge and support. This has been particularly useful in helping to improve the quality of teaching and in strengthening the governing body.

Governance of the school

- Since the school's last inspection, governors have been proactive in developing their roles. All areas of skill are covered and the governors have expertise that supports the school well. They share the passion of senior leaders to secure the best possible outcomes for all the pupils.
- The governing body provides effective support to the executive headteacher and school community. Governors know how well the school is doing and how it compares with other schools through detailed reports from the executive headteacher and their own first-hand visits. External expertise is used to validate these reports and this enables governors to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Governors carefully monitor the use of additional funding, both for the pupil premium and the PE and sport grant, to make sure that they improve outcomes for pupils. They are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that there are no barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils.
- The governing body takes seriously its responsibilities to keep pupils safe. A number of governors have undertaken training to give them the skills to fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Regular and appropriate training for staff is undertaken and is up to date. Rigorous and robust systems are in place in all areas of safeguarding, and all staff understand them. The school sensitively handles relationships with parents and families that may need extra support and advice at times. There are very effective relationships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and their welfare needs are met. Parents and staff are positive about how well the pupils are cared for and nurtured.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because they are not consistently good in all classes. As a result, pupils' progress is inconsistent.
- Leaders have done much to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve, and

evidence indicates that pupils are now making better progress. This is linked to teachers' good classroom management and pupils' positive attitudes to learning.

- The teaching of mathematics is not yet consistent throughout the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable. Leaders have identified this as an area requiring more improvement and have put in place a range of appropriate training. While pupils are able to apply their skills more effectively, they do not always have enough opportunities to deepen their understanding and mastery of mathematical ideas.
- Teachers do not consistently provide tasks that offer sufficient challenge. This is because some teachers' expectations are not high enough, especially in key stage 2.
- The teaching of writing has improved. Pupils cover a range of writing styles and their writing skills are developed progressively. Pupils learn how to use the correct grammar and apply other skills through activities completed during English lessons.
- There are good opportunities available for pupils to apply literacy and mathematical skills within subjects that they say they enjoy, such as topic, geography and art. However, these opportunities are not always used as effectively as they could be to harness pupils' enthusiasm and to help them make better progress in their literacy and numeracy work.
- Good teaching in the Reception class ensures that children get off to a good start. Activities are well planned to develop their knowledge, skills and routines. These help children to become independent and learn confidently.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. As a result, a solid foundation is built, from which pupils can develop into confident, fluent and expressive readers. Teachers and support staff use a range of strategies to instil a love of reading and develop pupils' skills in reading for meaning and comprehension.
- Support staff make a good contribution to supporting the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who are fully included in lessons.
- Relationships are positive between pupils and adults. The pupils respect adults and listen carefully to instructions, which benefits their 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 motto of 'belong, inspire, explore, succeed' is lived out in practice. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy collaborating with each other to develop their thoughts and opinions.
- All pupils feel valued, and equality of opportunity is clearly within the culture of the school. Pupils told the inspector that there is always an adult to talk to if something is worrying them.
- The majority of parents, staff and pupils talk positively about pupils' behaviour. Some of the parents that completed the online questionnaire raised behaviour and bullying as a concern. The inspector viewed a wide range of evidence which shows that bullying

and racist incidents are rare. Pupils who spoke with the inspector agreed that this is the case.

- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Through assemblies and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, pupils know how to keep safe in a range of situations. This includes when using the road and when exposed to potential hazards. Pupils also have a good appreciation of e-safety. They apply their understanding to everyday situations when these arise.
- The school has effective links with external agencies to support pupils with additional needs. Leaders are very active in supporting children and families who need additional help.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are proud of their school, saying it is 'fantastic, amazing, and cool'. Conduct in and around the school is typically good and pupils say that they follow the school rules. The school is a calm and orderly learning environment.
- The school manages behaviour well. Pupils understand the consequences of poor behaviour and why it is important to behave well. Pupils who spoke with the inspector have a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- Typically, pupils are motivated to learn. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and most pupils take pride in their work. Occasionally, when work is not precisely matched to pupils' needs, they make less progress and they do not achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils' attendance is lower than the national averages. Some pupils' rates of attendance have affected the progress they have made in school. School leaders have worked hard to identify ways it can improve. There are clear signs that attendance is rising overall, especially for pupils who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because the progress pupils make across the school is not consistently good. Pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 in 2018 was not as good as other pupils nationally.
- In 2018, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 were lower than the national figures. Attainment in mathematics was well below the national average. The small number of pupils in Year 6 in 2018 means that each pupil's performance has a marked effect on the school's overall figures. In 2018, a third of Year 6 pupils had SEND. This influenced the standards reached.
- There remains a legacy of underachievement in key stage 2 as a result of previous weaker teaching. This has been successfully identified by the executive headteacher, but gaps in pupils' learning remain, particularly in mathematics. This is because pupils

are not able to use their knowledge of number effectively to solve mathematical problems.

- Nonetheless, information kept by the school about the current pupils in Year 6 indicates that they are making better progress than in the past. The work seen during the inspection confirms this. This means that the current Year 6 pupils are better prepared for secondary school.
- Children make good progress in early years, and by the end of Reception Year, the percentage of children achieving a good level of development is in line with the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 shows that pupils learn well and that the teaching of phonics is good. In the last phonics screening check in 2018, the proportion reaching the expected standard was above average.
- The small number of pupils in Year 2 in 2018 means it is hard to make meaningful comparisons with national figures without identifying pupils. The school's records and inspection activities indicate that attainment at key stage 1 is consistently improving and that current pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding with increasing success to ensure that the relatively low number of disadvantaged pupils are well supported. Staff use a range of strategies to help pupils make better progress. The school's pupil premium champion works alongside other staff to ensure that disadvantaged pupils do not fall behind others.
- Pupils with SEND receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants, which is suited to their specific needs. They currently make good progress from their individual starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- The executive headteacher has established a rigorous new assessment system which shows that children enter the school with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. From this point, they make good progress and catch up quickly. As a result, they acquire the skills needed to access the curriculum when they start in Year 1.
- The provision is well led and managed. The setting provides a stimulating environment where children learn and thrive. A wide range of exciting indoor and outdoor learning activities are well planned and provided.
- Teaching is good. Staff assess children's progress regularly and their learning journals show evidence of the good progress made by children of all abilities.
- Children behave well. They work well together and enjoy taking turns equally. Staff have created a caring and positive environment where children feel secure and able to engage in their learning.
- The breadth of curriculum is appropriate. Children are eager to learn and enjoy the range of activities on offer. Children enjoy a range of activities to develop their understanding of the stories that they read. For example, after reading 'The Hungry Caterpillar', children developed their knowledge of understanding instructions through

cooking. The children enjoyed this task and staff deepened their thinking with good questioning.

- Leaders develop good relationships with parents and families. They engage parents in their children's learning very well through a range of activities, such as 'stay and play' sessions and 'Wow Wednesdays'.
- Safeguarding arrangements for the early years provision are effective. Risks are managed well and all staff are vigilant. Statutory welfare requirements are met.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 123132 |
| Local authority | Oxfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10088137 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 37 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Debbie Croft |
| Executive Headteacher | Lisa Horton |
| Telephone number | 01235 521766 |
| Website | www.culhamprimary.co.uk |
| Email address | office.3190@culham.oxon.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 28 February–1 March 2017 |

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The three classes all have mixed-age groups.
- The school is in a federation with Clifton Hampden Church of England School, which is led by the executive headteacher.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British, with very few who speak English as an additional language or being from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils supported by funding through the pupil premium is below average. In 2018, there were fewer than five disadvantaged pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- There have been considerable staff changes since the last inspection, including at senior level. A new executive headteacher was appointed in September 2017. All the

teachers have joined the school within the last year. The middle leaders work across the federation to develop outcomes.

- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in April 2016.
- The school has received support from the Diocese of Oxford's school improvement team and Oxfordshire local authority.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in nine lessons; all of these were joint observations with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector observed the school's work. He looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, and pupils' work in books.
- Discussions took place with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lessons and at playtimes. The inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- Meetings were held with school staff, six members of the governing body, and parents and carers.
- The inspector took into consideration nine responses to the online staff questionnaire and seven responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector took into account 16 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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