School report

Speldhurst Church of England Primary School

Langton Road, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN3 0NP

Inspection dates	6–7 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	**Outstanding**	**1**
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The achievement of pupils is outstanding. Pupils make consistently strong progress as they move through the school so that, by the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils making at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics is high.
- Teachers provide work that is not too easy or too hard for all pupils so that they learn exceptionally well. The substantial proportion of teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils are fully engaged in improving their own work and have a clear understanding of how to become even more successful in their learning.
- Other adults within the classroom provide high-quality support and make an exceptional contribution to pupils' progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress because of the care and additional provision they receive.
- Pupils are safe and secure and their behaviour is outstanding both during lessons and around the school. They are welcoming and treat each other with respect.
- Attendance is high. Pupils enjoy school and say they always feel safe because all staff are concerned for their welfare.
- Children in Reception make rapid gains in the qualities and skills that enable them to become successful learners as they enter Year 1.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. Pupils participate in a range of events which enhance their respect of other cultures.
- The school fully involves parents and carers in their child's education and the very large majority say their child is happy at this school.
- The headteacher has high ambitions for the school. Staff share in her expectation that every pupil should make the best possible progress regardless of their abilities and background.
- Leaders at all levels are exceptional. The assistant headteacher and subject leaders have skills and qualities which ensure a rich learning experience is consistently enjoyed by all pupils across a range of subjects.
- Governors work very well with the school leaders. They have a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the school and maintain a strong focus on how it may continue to improve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, four of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspector listened to pupils read, visited assemblies and looked at pupils' work in their exercise books.
- The inspector met with pupils and talked about their work. Meetings were also held with staff including subject leaders, the headteacher, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Documentation covering safeguarding, the management of performance of staff, records of behaviour and safety, attendance and checks on pupils' attainment and progress was reviewed.
- The inspector took account of the 41 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and the 13 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Howard Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Year 6 pupils are taught as one group. All other pupils are taught in mixed-age classes: Reception and Year 1; Years 2 and 3; and Years 4 and 5.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the pupil premium funding, which is the extra government support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families, is well below average. In this school, it relates to pupils who are known to qualify for free school meals.
- When compared to national figures, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action is average; the proportion of pupils at school action or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has been acknowledged by the Department for Education as being among the top 250 schools nationally in terms of the progress pupils make in Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop pupils' understanding of mathematical patterns through their experience and use of music.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Achievement is outstanding because pupils attain standards which are markedly above the national average by the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils making good progress for their age compared to national figures is high in reading and mathematics. The large majority of pupils make exceptional progress in writing.
- The application of pupils' writing skills across all subjects, an improvement point from the previous inspection, has been fully addressed. The quality of work in pupils' books is consistently high.
- Standards in reading are above the national average at the end of Year 2. Pupils demonstrate an effective understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) as seen in the 2013 national check at the end of Year 1. Pupils demonstrate developed inference skills and enjoy reading a range of books, including books by Michael Morpurgo, such as *The Butterfly Lion*.
- Children in the Reception Year make an excellent start in their learning. The majority of children enter with skills above the levels expected for their age. Adults are especially adept at providing a range of appropriately stimulating experiences to ensure pupils make exemplary progress in all areas of learning.
- The achievement of more-able pupils is consistently strong. Their attainment in writing by the end of Key Stage 2 is above that of similar pupils nationally and the percentage of pupils who achieve the highest level (Level 6) in mathematics is high.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do exceedingly well. The tailored support they receive, both within lessons and through additional provision, ensures they make progress equal to their peers. Their achievement in mathematics is especially strong.
- There are too few pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium to reliably measure attainment gaps against their peers at the end of Year 6. However, across the school, the pupil premium funding is used exceptionally well to support individual pupils and the progress they make matches, and sometimes exceeds, that of their peers in both English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching brings about high-quality learning for pupils so that they make rapid progress in all subjects as they move through the school.
- Activities sustain pupils' engagement throughout lessons. For example, in one Year 3/4 class, use of images and reference to high-quality displays of pupils' work established a positive climate for learning throughout. Video recording of pupils reading their poems served to both celebrate and further deepen their understanding.
- Pupils' attainment is raised by the high quality of teachers' written and oral feedback. In one Year 6 writing workshop, the written comments in pupils' books enabled them to see how they may be more successful. Pupils used these to improve their work and check their own progress against their personal learning targets as the lesson developed.
- Pupils are set work that is neither too easy nor too difficult throughout their activities. In a Year 4/5 session pupils worked collaboratively to analyse a range of newspaper articles covering the recent floods. Progress was sustained for all pupils as they worked across a range of scenarios which further extended their learning.
- Teachers use questioning effectively. In one Year 6 session pupils developed their ideas during role-play tasks as they were skilfully questioned in ways which required them to consider a range of methods to portray characters in their story writing. Consequently, they went on to produce work of a high standard.
- Pupils' use of discrete subject skills is developed effectively. In a Year 1/2 science lesson, pupils were required to use key terms accurately and to make predictions while talking about the qualities of a range of materials before testing these in their experiments.

- In Reception and Year 1, adults are adept in encouraging the use of literacy skills. For example, in a session based on *Jack and the Beanstalk*, younger children enthusiastically acted out a sequence drawing on a range of key words, while pupils in Year 1 applied their understanding of grammar to good effect as they recounted the story in writing.
- Additional adults play a key role in supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They cooperate effectively with class teachers so that pupils make the best possible progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is very effective and the quality of pupils' work is of a high standard. An exemplary feature is the discrete focus on problem investigations. However, the school has identified the need to develop pupils' understanding of mathematical patterns through their experience and use of music.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are always enthusiastic about their learning and aspire to make the best possible progress in their work. They are articulate and happily engage with one another to share their ideas and talk about their activities. They take pride in their work and remain fully engaged in their tasks regardless of the challenge.
- Children in Reception enjoy using the range of resources to explore their ideas together. They listen closely to adults and to each other and are careful to use the equipment safely. They are confident to talk about their learning and happy to take time to explain their work.
- Pupils move sensibly around the school and the atmosphere in the dinner hall is calm. Pupils play happily together and there is a strong sense of community that reflects the school's Christian values. The conduct of pupils during assemblies is superb and they sing and laugh together in shared experiences which enrich their reflection on profound questions, such as 'What is God really like?'
- Pupils relish taking responsibilities within school. Older pupils mentor and care for younger children and some act as sports leaders. Pupils work on business projects together and have a keen awareness of eco-friendly initiatives. Pupils are active within the local community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have an appropriate level of understanding of how to use the internet safely. They say there is no bullying of any kind and that racist incidents do not occur. Pupils are very tolerant of each other and feel secure to express themselves without fear of discrimination.
- Attendance is high. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were of the opinion their child was well looked after and felt safe at school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has clarity of purpose to ensure pupils are increasingly successful in their learning. All staff share in this endeavour that pupils make the best possible progress in all their subjects. The school's development plans are thorough and reflect these ambitions.
- The assistant headteacher and middle leaders are highly skilled in promoting consistently effective practice across the school. Leaders routinely check the quality of provision and there is strong collaborative work to share new ways of improving the quality of teaching.
- Checks on the progress pupils make are routine and rigorous. Pupils have challenging targets and these are referenced during regular observations of teaching and reviews of the quality of work in pupils' books. Any potential underachievement by pupils is remedied immediately by refining classroom practice.
- Teachers value the bespoke training they receive which leads to the high-quality teaching and outstanding achievement of pupils. Teachers' performance and pay progression are linked closely to the progress pupils make.
- The local authority regards the school as a centre of excellence and school leaders are

extensively engaged in promoting exceptional practice outside the school, including the support of newly qualified teachers.

- There is excellent provision to ensure equality of opportunity. The support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is exemplary. Regardless of the individual needs of pupils, the provision for their learning and progress is personalised and includes individual support and additional resources. Parents and carers are effectively involved, too.
- Sport is valued within the school. Pupils especially enjoy swimming and the cross-country running club. A detailed action plan is serving to ensure the primary sports funding is impacting positively on pupils' well-being and developing the capacity of teachers to deliver physical education.
- Subjects are imaginatively designed to actively engage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Resources are effectively used to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils explore themes across subjects and through 'hands-on' experiences, such as archaeology 'digs'. Homework provides a good extension of pupils' learning, too.
- There is a wide range of activities that serve to extend pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences. Pupils are involved within the community in charitable work and the choir sings at local events. Older pupils learn to develop skills in caring for others. Pupils share in exchange visits with pupils from schools in London and Madrid. Spanish is taught, as is French. Pupils have staged their own production of the Lion King.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a very clear understanding of how well the school performs in comparison to others nationally. They provide appropriate challenge and support and maintain a strong focus on ensuring the school continues to move forward. They are fully aware of how well every pupil is doing and closely monitor the impact of spending of the pupil premium funding to ensure it has positive outcomes for these pupils. Governors have agreed how the additional sports funding is to be spent so that it will bring about long-term gains by increasing the capacity of teachers to deliver enhanced physical education for pupils. Performance management procedures are effective and governors ensure that pay and promotion are supported by evidence that teaching is improving pupils' progress. The financial management of the school budget is secure. All statutory duties are addressed and discrimination is not countenanced within the school. Safeguarding procedures are in place and risk assessments, including those for educational visits, are appropriately detailed.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	118607
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	431416

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ivan Goodsell
Headteacher	Stephanie Hayward
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2009
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Fax number	01892 862196
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