

Dr South's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Bletchington Road, Islip, Kidlington, OX5 2TQ

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Attainment for pupils who have been at Dr South's for all of their education is above national levels in Year 6, with an increasing number of pupils working at the higher Level 5.
- Most pupils are making good progress in reading and mathematics.
- Almost all teaching is good, with an increasing proportion that is outstanding. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are particularly well taught and supported so that they make good progress in their learning and personal development.
- Staff, parents, carers and pupils share a strong belief in the values of their school.
- Pupils are very happy at school. Warm and trusting relationships underpin their enjoyment of learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and are nurtured well.
- The high numbers of pupils who join Key Stage 2 during the school year quickly settle in.
- The headteacher has been highly effective in leading changes that have resulted in rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement since his appointment. He is strongly supported by a knowledgeable and challenging governing body.
- The school provides pupils with an interesting range of subjects, topics and experiences which contribute strongly to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Everyone is included and respected.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough to ensure all pupils' progress is rapid and sustained across all year groups.
- Occasional lack of focus on certain essential skills and aspects such as presentation has meant pupils' progress in writing has been inconsistent, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Teachers' comments when marking pupils' work do not always help pupils to improve their work effectively.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and have not been fully involved in checking the quality of teaching or pupils' attainment.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons involving six teachers; four lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector held discussions with school leaders, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the Oxford Diocese.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and samples of pupils' work. He heard groups of pupils read and spoke with others about behaviour and safety arrangements at the school.
- Account was taken of the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by those parents and carers who spoke with the inspector at the start of the school day, or wrote letters. The inspector also considered 14 staff questionnaires.
- As part of Creativity Week, the normal timetable was suspended with all pupils working on creative activities each day. The inspector observed literacy and mathematics teaching and phonics sessions. He also looked at pupils' workbooks to inform the judgements on the quality of teaching and progress in English and mathematics over time.
- During the inspection, all pupils in Years 1 and 2 were involved in creative activities led by a visiting artist.

Inspection team

Michael Bartleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for specific groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is very small. During the inspection, there were no pupils supported by the pupil premium at the school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of one class containing full-time Reception children and part-time Nursery children. The school also offers the option of flexible 'wrap around care' for part-time Nursery children to extend their time in school to full-time.
- An above average proportion of pupils join the school part-way through their primary school education. A large proportion of these pupils have special educational needs. More than a third of the Year 6 pupils in 2012 did not start their education at the school.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2011.
- A before-school breakfast club and after school provision, managed by the governing body, run daily.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding so all pupils make rapid and sustained progress, particularly in Years 3 and 4 in writing, by ensuring that:
 - the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and sentence construction are reinforced in all lessons
 - teachers always insist on the highest standards of presentation
 - teachers increase the level of challenge in lessons so more pupils reach the higher levels
 - teachers' comments in marking show pupils clearly how they can improve their work
 - teachers give pupils clear examples of the steps to follow in producing good quality writing, so that pupils can refer to them when completing their own work
 - good quality pupils' writing is displayed in the classrooms and around the school.
- Further develop the roles of subject leaders, by:
 - giving them more opportunities to check on teaching and learning
 - involving them fully in data analysis, tracking pupils' progress and checking school improvements.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and language, and at expected levels in Reception. They are well taught and make good progress. Children build good relationships with each other, the adults around them and the older children. The 2013 school data show that the vast majority of children are above expected levels for their age when they start Year 1.
- By the time the pupils leave at the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics is above average, and an increasing number of pupils attain the higher Level 5. This is particularly true for those who have been at the school for all their education and means that the progress pupils make from their starting points is good. However, this good academic progress is not reflected in whole-school data for 2013 because of the significant minority of pupils who had recently joined the school and were working at below age-related expectations and, despite good progress since their arrival, had not caught up with their classmates.
- The school's own data for 2013 show that attainment has improved at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Increasing numbers of pupils in Year 2 are making better progress than previously to reach above average standards.
- Previous underachievement has been addressed, gaps between groups are closing rapidly and more pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age. More able pupils make particularly good progress in mathematics in the school where challenging work extends the pupils well.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the few pupils who have been supported by the pupil premium make accelerated progress due to highly focused one-to-one sessions. The numbers of pupils supported by the pupil premium are too small to make comparisons with others about their attainment in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in writing is good overall but is not consistently as strong as reading and mathematics, particularly in Years 3 and 4. A few pupils do not write confidently, often making errors in spellings, punctuation and sentence construction. Presentation is too often poor.
- The school has worked effectively to improve the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) by using teachers and teaching assistants to run daily small-group sessions. Results in the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2012 and 2013 were above average.
- Attainment in reading is currently above expected levels in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils have good opportunities to read for a variety of purposes in lessons and enjoy reading a wide range of books.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Almost all teaching is typically good and there are elements of outstanding practice. This is particularly the case in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where teachers and other practitioners plan for children's next steps in learning especially well.
- Across the school, teachers plan imaginative activities that excite and motivate pupils to succeed. For example, during the inspection, Years 1 and 2 pupils explored printing and colour as part of their Creativity Week. The pupils were highly motivated and absorbed in the wide range of activities. The exhibition at the end of the week celebrated the high standard of work and was very much enjoyed by parents and carers.
- The focus on individual needs ensures that disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those who are gifted and talented and those who have recently joined the school are supported effectively and progress well.

- Reading is promoted well. Pupils read regularly to adults as part of their guided reading sessions.
- The proportion of good and outstanding teaching is increasing well but it not yet consistently strong enough to fully overcome slower progress, particularly in Years 3 and 4 in writing.
- In the better lessons, relationships are strong and teachers and teaching assistants question pupils effectively, securing good understanding. Good links are made with previous work and other subjects. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss and share their ideas with each other.
- Where teaching is occasionally less strong, teachers underestimate what pupils can achieve and do not use assessment information to plan tasks which challenge all pupils sufficiently. This means that tasks do not move pupils' learning forward rapidly and time is not used effectively.
- Some teachers do not routinely give pupils clear examples of the steps to follow in producing good quality writing or display good examples of pupils' work in the classroom or around the school.
- Teachers' marking, although regular, is not always helpful in guiding pupils in their next steps, particularly in relation to their writing. Not all pupils are clear about their learning targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently good, and at times their conduct is outstanding. Pupils have a great desire to learn, and this contributes greatly to their good achievement as they get involved quickly in the learning activities.
- There is a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere in the school, and all groups of pupils get on well together.
- School records confirm that pupils' behaviour is good on a daily basis, although it is not yet exemplary because a few pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour.
- Parents have great confidence in the care that the school provides, and pupils agree that they feel happy and safe in school. Virtually all parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, or spoke to the inspector, judged behaviour to be good and their children to be safe in school. A few parents and carers expressed a wish to have more information on their child's progress.
- Discussions with pupils showed that they understand about different types of bullying. They said that although squabbles may sometimes arise, there is no bullying in school, and if it were to occur, staff would deal with it immediately.
- Pupils show clear values of respect and tolerance of others. This is because these aspects are central to the school's motto of 'Faith, hope and love'. They spoke knowledgeably and with pride about the recent opening of the school's peace garden, their involvement in the design and how it is going to be used.
- The school has close working relationships with a number of outside agencies to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or who have additional needs.
- Pupils' attendance has risen in the last two years and is now above the national average, in part due to the strong line the governors and headteacher have taken over holidays in term times.
- Through a well-planned range of activities, for example Junior Citizen and cycling proficiency, pupils are helped to develop strategies that enable them to manage everyday risks for themselves, such as those associated with the internet, personal safety, roads and fire.

The leadership and management are good

- Improvements since the headteacher's appointment have been rapid. The strong leadership and drive of the headteacher have been the catalyst to improve teaching and to raise achievement. He has managed the pace of change very effectively and created a tightly knit, harmonious community.
- The governing body and the headteacher's accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and

weaknesses and the record of improvement show that leaders have a strong capacity to improve the school further.

- Regular lesson observations followed by detailed feedback to teachers and a successful training programme have ensured that most teaching is good, with an increasing proportion that is outstanding. There are clear links between the salary that teachers receive and pupils' good progress.
- The tracking of pupils' progress is rigorous and effective, which was an area for development from the last inspection. Staff routinely check that all pupils are on track to make good progress from their various starting points.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well, and this is reflected in the good achievement of all groups of pupils. There are no recorded incidents of harassment.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Partnerships with parents and carers are developed effectively and start with well-managed transition arrangements and the many workshops for parents and carers that introduce them to the school's teaching methods and ways of working.
- Topics bring together different subjects in a way that the pupils describe as 'fun'. Older pupils showed obvious enjoyment and knowledge of the book 'Skellig', which was the theme for the autumn term. Visits, including residential visits, close links with the local church and community and a wide range of after-school clubs, add further enhancement. Pupils have good opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and to take part in singing events. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and intrinsic to all activities.
- Pupils also take part in a good variety of sporting activities, and are highly enthusiastic about the coaching sessions led by a sports coach funded through the national sports funding and the school's Friends association. The headteacher has drawn up plans to measure the impact of this funding on pupils' participation and development of skills.
- The headteacher's presence around the school at the start and end of the school day is highly effective in cementing strong relationships with parents and carers.
- The local authority and the diocese advisers provide regular support for school leaders and governors which has helped them to evaluate the school's performance accurately and to develop a clear strategy to improve it further. The school works effectively with a range of others in the local area for teachers' training and for checking the accuracy of assessments.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because initiatives to improve pupils' writing have not yet been translated into higher attainment and subject leaders are new to their roles.

■ The governance of the school:

- The well-trained governing body supports and monitors the work of the school effectively. Governors understand the school's performance information well and how the school has improved. They provide good support to leaders because they are able to ask the difficult questions about how decisions will have an impact on pupils' learning. The governing body is kept informed about how teaching is improving. Governors visit the school regularly to check on performance. This has led to good decisions being made on the rewards that teachers receive and the allocation of the school's finances, which it monitors effectively. The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively, ensuring, for example, that procedures for safeguarding pupils are well managed, regularly reviewed and fully meet national requirements.

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	123195
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	426613

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Baker
Headteacher	Huw Morgan
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2008
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