

Purley Church of England Primary School

Purley Village, Purley-on-Thames, Reading, Berkshire RG8 8AF

Inspection dates

7–8 December 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- In this caring school, which is often described as 'like a family', the personal development of pupils is excellent. As soon as children start at the school, staff show them how to behave impeccably and support each other.
- The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of this recently expanded school. She has made many improvements to the building and teaching and learning. Consequently, all pupils receive a good standard of education that enables them to achieve well.
- Governors provide effective challenge and support to leaders because they are ambitious for pupils. They know the school well and are keen to develop their use of pupils' progress information.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning well to check and extend pupils' learning. As a result, pupils make good progress across the curriculum.
- Reading is a strength of the school. Pupils develop a love of reading and learn to read proficiently because teachers promote reading very well.
- The recently introduced curriculum is flexible to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. Topics such as 'Mayan Mayhem!' are exciting for pupils.
- Children in the early years make good progress. Teachers form strong relationships with families as soon as children start school that support their development well.
- The new Reception and Year 1 class teacher has made some changes to the indoor and outside areas to improve children's attainment across the different areas of learning. These changes are not yet complete.
- Middle leaders are relatively new to their roles. Even though they have had limited training, they have made some positive changes to the curriculum. However, they cannot describe the impact of their work on pupils' learning.
- The assessment system is very new and does not yet provide enough information about pupils' progress. Teachers are learning to use this system alongside the new curriculum. Assessment information does not always accurately reflect pupils' achievement in all subjects.
- The most able pupils' achievement is stronger in reading than writing and mathematics. Lessons are not always consistently challenging, particularly in mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership, management and governance by:
 - continuing to develop the assessment system so that leaders and governors can explain the impact of their work on different groups across the curriculum
 - extending further the skills of middle leaders.
- Further pupils' outcomes, particularly for the most able in writing and mathematics, by:
 - developing teachers' understanding of how pupils progress through the recently introduced curriculum
 - ensuring that teaching is consistently challenging for pupils.
- Continue to enhance the early years outside area so that children achieve well across all of the areas of learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher cares deeply about the pupils; she knows each one by name and talks about them with much enthusiasm. She works with conviction to ensure that the school is, as staff, parents and governors say, 'like a family'. As a result, the personal development and behaviour of pupils is excellent.
- The school has changed considerably since the last inspection as it has expanded to include pupils in key stage 2. The headteacher has overcome many challenges, such as securing funding for the new building. She has worked proactively, in conjunction with the local authority and the governing body, so that the school is able to provide a good standard of education for all pupils.
- The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Since joining the school three years ago, she has made changes to improve teaching and learning. For example, she recognised the need to improve teachers' assessment of pupils' progress. Following the introduction of a new curriculum, she has very recently implemented a new system of assessment. However, this is ongoing and the headteacher knows that there is still some work to do to ensure that teachers' assessments and records of pupils' progress accurately reflect pupils' achievement across the curriculum.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, receive effective additional support. For example, each pupil has the support of a learning mentor, who visits them in class each day to check their progress. Disadvantaged pupils make good and sometimes better progress from their varied starting points.
- The school makes effective use of the sport premium. Staff have benefited from additional training and pupils have had greater access to a wider range of extra-curricular sports such as cheerleading, cricket and street dance.
- Leaders provide pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with extra support to increase their learning. Where necessary and possible, given limited availability, this includes the advice of other professionals. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points. They achieve particularly well in reading because they receive extra phonics teaching and reading practice.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. A dedicated teaching assistant supports these pupils to acquire helpful vocabulary and prepare for new topics. Bilingual books also help pupils to develop proficiency in their own language.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values are promoted well. These opportunities are woven into the curriculum and are supported effectively by the school's own values. For example, the curriculum reinforces pupils' growing understanding of mutual respect and tolerance. A link with a school in the United States of America, along with studies of places in the United Kingdom and celebrations of different religions, helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is relatively new as it has been adapted to meet changes to national requirements and accommodate the growing key stage 2. It incorporates a broad

range of subjects into exciting topics such as 'Mayan Mayhem' and 'Shall I call the doctor?' that capture pupils' imagination. As a result, pupils make good progress across a range of subjects. The curriculum is flexible to provide for pupils in mixed-age classes. Whole-school 'mini-topics' such as the recent Tim Peake rocket challenge enable pupils of different ages to work together to build rockets and measure how far they travel. Extra-curricular clubs provide further learning opportunities including gym, choir and keyboard skills.

- Middle leaders are relatively new to their roles. They have made some changes to the curriculum that have raised pupils' achievement, such as introducing a new approach to spelling and the 'KIRFs – key instant recall facts' for mathematics. However, middle leaders are not able to explain the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes. They have had limited opportunities to develop their expertise.
- Most parents value the school. They appreciate the friendly environment that provides their children with a range of opportunities, especially with the woodland school and music that includes violin lessons for Year 3. The very large majority of parents would recommend the school.
- The diocese provides valuable support to the headteacher. As a result of a strong relationship between the headteacher and the representative, this support is flexible and timely.

Governance of the school

- Governors are passionate about the school and ambitious for pupils. They know the school well because they visit often and receive some helpful information from the headteacher. They use this to provide effective challenge and support to leaders. Although governors are keen to challenge leaders more to show the impact of their work on pupils' achievement, they themselves are not yet able to describe fully how well pupils progress.
- The governing body has taken some steps to review its work and made changes so that it is more effective. For example, it has reviewed the range of skills that each governor brings and used this information to support the recruitment of new governors. The governors recognise the importance of planning for the future and have recently started to develop a new three-year plan, working with the headteacher.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Strong relationships between staff, parents and pupils promote pupils' welfare. In this small school, staff take the time to get to know pupils and their families. This enables staff, such as the emotional learning support assistant, to provide timely help to keep pupils safe and support their personal development.
- The headteacher understands fully the importance of safeguarding. She ensures that staff receive appropriate training and useful updates. Records of safeguarding are detailed and show that leaders take appropriate actions to keep pupils safe,

challenging other professionals where necessary. Governors maintain close oversight of safeguarding to assure themselves that systems are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to enable pupils to make links across the curriculum. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 science lesson, pupils were learning about changing liquids to solids. Pupils worked effectively in groups to make and eat ice cream. The teacher ensured that pupils used a thermometer to measure the temperature of the ice so that they could practise reading negative numbers from a scale at the same time. Consequently, pupils achieve well across the range of subjects.
- Pupils demonstrate a love of reading and read well. Phonics lessons are challenging and help pupils to build essential skills. In one lesson, younger pupils learned to read and spell challenging words such as 'gnome' and 'scooter'. Older pupils read proficiently and talk with great enthusiasm about the characters and plot in their stories. A Year 6 pupil explained how his teacher often reads the story so far and then leaves pupils with a 'cliffhanger', adding that this meant he was compelled regularly to read each story for himself before the next instalment!
- Last year, leaders made some changes to the mathematics curriculum, such as ensuring that pupils can recall number facts and increasing opportunities for pupils to solve problems. As a result of the changes, the proportion of pupils in all year groups reaching the expectations for their age in mathematics is now similar to that in reading and writing.
- Staff ask pupils probing questions in lessons to check their understanding and extend their learning effectively. In one lesson, some younger pupils were learning about contractions. The teacher asked pupils to explain what is meant by: 'he's', 'don't' and 'wouldn't'. The teacher paused when asking about the meaning of 'let's'. This prompted the pupils to share their misconceptions and identify that the apostrophe is placed where the missing letters would be.
- Teachers provide pupils with a range of reasons to write. Consequently, pupils make good progress in writing. Lessons help pupils to understand the features of different texts, acquire important language and write appropriately for an audience. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils wrote their own news reports about a fire in Indonesia and then used these reports to create news bulletins on video.
- The most able pupils benefit from some small-group activities such as book clubs and opportunities to deepen their understanding in lessons. However, more pupils reach the higher levels in reading than in writing and mathematics. Teachers know who the most able pupils are, have high expectations for them and are providing some challenging activities for them. Nevertheless, teaching is not always consistently challenging, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' achievement is not yet accurate enough. This is particularly the case in key stage 2 where the curriculum is relatively new and teachers are developing their understanding of how pupils progress in different subjects.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils model exemplary attitudes and enjoy celebrating the success of others. When the Year 5 and 6 class were choosing their 'Purley Paragon', the pupils' own weekly award for behaviour and attitudes, they readily identified fellow pupils who had shown resilience and grown in self-confidence. Pupils fully understand that personalities and individuals matter, and value each other accordingly, because staff treat them in the same way. As such, all pupils live the school motto, 'learn to love, love to learn'.
- Bullying is very rare. This is because pupils work collaboratively to resolve any disputes they might have, and understand the impact poor behaviour can have on others. Pupils completely feel safe and are fully confident that staff will help them if they have a problem, as one pupil said, 'in a caring manner'.
- Pupils show that they understand the importance of equality, and discrimination is very rare. This is a result of the strong guidance and support that pupils receive from staff and the wider community. One child said, 'It's a great school if you are a different religion, different race, different culture, or speak a different language.'
- Pupils confidently know how to keep themselves safe. They have a robust knowledge of internet safety and know how to manage risk when they are out and about in public. The school regularly reinforces personal safety through initiatives such as anti-bullying week and regular safety lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils know and value the 'good to be green' system that the school has put in place to manage behaviour. Pupils of all ages respond very well to praise, and follow the high expectations that staff set for them. As such, pupils throughout the school are very self-disciplined and any incidents of poor behaviour are unusual.
- During break times, pupils of all ages play well together and with adults. Pupils appreciate the new equipment that they have. The slide is particularly popular! During lunchtime, pupils are very well-mannered and polite. This is reinforced at the headteacher's 'Delightful Diners' club that helps pupils develop broader social interaction skills.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent behaviour in class. Consequently, classrooms are busy places. Pupils listen attentively, ask interesting questions, and show great respect for their teachers and fellow learners. They also take great pride in their work and present it to a very high standard.
- Pupils' attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, has improved. Rates of attendance are similar to the national average because leaders provide extensive support to families to ensure that pupils are in school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Across the school, pupils make good progress from their starting points in a range of subjects. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils and the different subjects to ensure that all pupils achieve well across the curriculum.
- Pupils are avid and proficient readers because teachers prioritise the development of this important skill. Pupils' achievement is strongest in reading. Last year, most pupils in Year 1 met the standard expected for their age in the Year 1 phonics check. At the end of key stage 1 in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected for their age in reading was similar to the national average.
- The large majority of pupils currently at the school are meeting the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum is suitable and interesting for pupils. Teachers provide extra support to pupils who are at risk of falling behind so that they keep up with national expectations.
- Last year, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the early years increased because leaders made some changes to the curriculum. The large majority of children reached the expected level and a small minority exceeded these expectations.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good or better progress across the curriculum. They receive extra help that matches their individual needs closely so that some have made rapid progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as their classmates. These pupils make particularly good progress in reading because they benefit from support to develop their communication and language skills.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their varied starting points. Teachers ensure that these pupils receive extra support to secure important reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- Previously, pupils' achievement in mathematics has been weaker than in reading and writing. However, current pupils are now making good progress in mathematics. Changes to the teaching of mathematics are improving pupils' outcomes in this subject.
- More pupils reach the higher standards in reading than in writing or mathematics. Last year, the proportion of pupils exceeding the standards expected for their age was above the national average. Across key stage 1 and key stage 2, the most able pupils' achievement is highest in reading. Teaching has not yet ensured that enough of these pupils reach the highest standards in writing or mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- The headteacher leads the early years and has maintained a clear focus on securing good teaching and promoting children's achievement across the areas of learning. For example, last year, the headteacher noted that children had not achieved as well in one aspect of mathematics. Therefore, she ensured that staff provided a wider range

of mathematics activities to support children's development. As a result, children's achievement in this area of learning increased.

- Children join the Reception Year with a range of skills and abilities, though overall these are broadly typical for their age. Children make good progress across the areas of learning. Last year, the large majority of children were well prepared for Year 1. Nevertheless, children's attainment across the areas of learning was uneven last year. The new teacher has started to make changes to the indoor and outside areas to capture children's interests by creating reading dens, a 'builder's yard' and a 'worm home'. This work to provide greater opportunities to extend children's learning across the curriculum is not yet complete.
- Teachers form strong relationships with children, which supports their development well. As a result, children make good progress in the early years. For example, one child was practising writing the numbers 1 to 10 in order on a whiteboard. She showed this to the teacher, who praised her for ordering the numbers correctly, before helping her to write the digit '7' correctly. The child went off and practised writing the number seven correctly.
- The valuable partnership between home and school is established well in the early years. Before children join the school, staff visit each home and invite parents to share important information about their child. Parents are also welcomed into school to attend helpful information evenings and open mornings, where they can see learning in action. Consequently, parents speak with enthusiasm about the staff, who many describe as 'approachable' and 'dedicated'.
- Children's behaviour and personal development is excellent. This is because staff show children how to behave and promote the school's values such as 'responsibility' very well. For example, one child found a worm while digging carefully in the 'worm home'. He showed it with pride to his teacher and another child, before adding that he would like to keep it in the classroom. The teacher explained that this would not be the right place for the worm to live and supported the children to work together to find the best safe place for the worm to go to.

School details

Unique reference number	109971
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10019827

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Catherine Hester
Headteacher	Karen Fakes
Telephone number	01189 842384
Website	www.purleyprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@purley.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 February 2010

Information about this school

- Purley Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are four mixed-age classes. The school was previously known as Purley Church of England Infant School and at the last inspection in February 2010, the infant school was judged to be outstanding.
- In September 2013, the school began a planned programme of expansion and opened key stage 2 classes. There are now pupils in all year groups in key stage 2. Year 6 pupils started in autumn 2016 so there is currently no published performance information for key stage 2.
- The majority of pupils are White British and others come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. A small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average. This group represents about a fifth of pupils in the school. However, in some classes, including in

the early years, there are very few or no disadvantaged pupils.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also higher than that of other schools nationally.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils learning in lessons in all classes, spoke to pupils and looked at their work.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, a group of pupils, four members of the governing body, a representative of the Diocese of Oxford and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke to several parents in school and on the playground. They also took into account 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- A range of documents were looked at including the school's information about pupils' achievement and records concerning pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Caroline Dulon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Dom Cook

Her Majesty's Inspector

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