

Inspection of Silchester Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Silchester, Reading, Berkshire RG7 2NJ

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a happy and harmonious community. In the last year, there have been many changes in the school. The school has high aspirations for all pupils. Pupils feel that staff listen to their worries and help them to feel safe and secure at school. Pupils now achieve much better than they did because the school teaches them well.

Pupils behave well. Pupils of all ages are curious and enthusiastic, and they try hard in lessons. From the start in Reception, the school has high expectations of children's capabilities and behaviour. Lessons are calm and focused. Pupils are proud to explain what they learn and remember from previous topics.

The school promotes a keen sense that everyone has a part to play in creating such a positive community. The warm, friendly atmosphere in school is testament to the school's vision and values. Pupils' conduct around the school is polite and respectful. Pupils appreciate the range of opportunities to understand more about the world around them. These opportunities include visiting local museums and places of worship. Pupils display empathy by organising and leading litter picking in the village.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has a strong ambition for all pupils to achieve well. The governing body is effective, and it challenges, supports and checks all aspects of the school's work. The school has been mindful of staff well-being as improvements have been made. The school ensures that staff have the knowledge and skills they need to teach effectively.

The school sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn at each stage, including in the early years. However, in some subjects, systems to ensure that pupils can build on previously taught knowledge have not been established. This means that pupils in these subjects do not achieve as well as they could.

The school quickly identifies pupils' individual needs. Adaptations in lessons for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are precise in reading, writing and mathematics. In wider curriculum subjects, the curriculum is newer. Adaptations are improving in these subjects as staff expertise grows. This means that, overall, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Staff have strong subject knowledge. This helps them to explain and model ideas well to pupils. In many cases, the checks the school completes identify how well pupils have understood what has just been taught. Staff support pupils to address any mistakes or misunderstandings they may have. However, sometimes, these checks are not carried out carefully enough. This means that some pupils' mistakes are not identified and addressed as quickly as they could be.

Reading is a top priority. Children in early years learn phonics as soon as they start school. Knowledgeable staff teach pupils the sounds that letters make. Pupils read fluently by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Pupils particularly enjoy listening to their

teachers reading to them. They discuss important vocabulary and events in the stories that they have read and what they have learned from them. Consequently, pupils have a strong understanding of what they have read and what it means.

In early years, adults engage children in positive and constructive conversations. Carefully chosen activities develop and deepen children's knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. These help children to communicate increasingly well. Children enjoy reciting rhymes and poems. This helps them improve their communication skills.

The school uses initiatives and clear strategies effectively to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. Pupils enjoy being at school and attendance rates are high. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They try hard and low-level disruption is a rarity. Children in the early years show sustained levels of concentration. They learn to share and collaborate well with each other.

There is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' character, individuality and personal development. There are many opportunities to nurture pupils' talents and interests and for pupils to display them, for example through clubs such as choir and netball. Pupils learn to be good citizens and develop an understanding of democracy through opportunities such as being junior road safety officers and eco-leaders. Pupils display tolerance towards each other and celebrate differences.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, the school does not consistently make sure that pupils have fully understood what has just been taught. As a result, some misconceptions are not always identified and addressed as quickly as they could be, which can slow pupils' learning. The school needs to refine its strategies to ensure that all pupils' misconceptions are identified and addressed as they arise.
- The school has not yet fully established systems of checking how successfully pupils remember key knowledge in a few subjects. Consequently, teachers do not always have the strategies to check pupils' understanding, so there are gaps in pupils' knowledge in these subjects. The school should ensure that there are effective systems in place for checking how well pupils are remembering the most important knowledge and that teachers are confident using them.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	116369
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10341448
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul King
Head of school	Rachel Moir
Executive headteacher	Glen Golding
Website	www.silchesterschool.org
Date of previous inspection	18 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Winchester and Portsmouth. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in March 2020. The next section 48 inspection will be within five years of the previous section 48 inspection.
- The executive headteacher and the head of school started their posts in September 2023.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the school’s governing board, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted’s online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential online staff survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school’s documentation, including leaders’ plans for improving the school, minutes from governing board meetings, records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Neil Pilsworth, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Stephen Cattell

His Majesty’s Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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