

Surrey Hills C of E Primary School

School Lane, Westcott, Dorking RH4 3QF

Inspection dates	1–2 December 2015
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite recent improvements, pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is too low.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils at Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics, although rising, are not high enough. This means that the pupils' rates of progress are too slow.
- In subjects across the curriculum, teaching and pupils' learning from Year 1 to Year 6 sometimes lack depth.
- Older pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in pieces of sufficient length.
- Pupils entitled to the support of the pupil premium funding do not achieve consistently as well as they should.
- The senior leadership team is new. Their evaluation of the school is too positive because it notes improvements in provision but gives insufficient weight to outcomes for pupils.
- Governors, too, give more weight to provision than outcomes and so, in some respects, believe that the school is better than is actually the case.
- Subject leaders, including those for English and mathematics, are growing into their roles but as yet have made only a limited impact on raising standards for pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and her senior team lead with determination and staff feel happy and well supported. As a result, this growing and changing school is getting better.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes.
- Pupils attain highly in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are taught well in these subjects.
- Reading is effectively taught across all year groups.
- Pupils behave very well. They like school and feel secure. They are well looked after. The procedures for keeping them safe are efficient.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's Christian foundation supports this very positively.
- The curriculum is broad and interesting. Pupils much enjoy the after-school clubs and visits out of school.
- The governing body is well organised, following a review. It carries out most of its work well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, and the outcomes for pupils, by
 - ensuring that teachers have sufficiently high expectations based on good subject knowledge, so that pupils make more rapid progress in mathematics and writing at Key Stage 2
 - giving pupils better opportunities to write, sometimes at greater length
 - raising teachers' expectations and knowledge of the foundation subjects.

- Continue to improve the quality of leadership and management by
 - developing the leadership skills and subject expertise of leaders for all subjects
 - basing self-evaluation and improvement planning on the robust analysis of outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that governors challenge the school rigorously on these evaluations.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Although the headteacher has shown great determination in providing the school with a clear direction and building a committed and happy staff team, this has not yet led to significant enough improvement in pupils' achievement. In the upper years of Key Stage 2 in particular, pupils' progress is still too mixed and pupils are not attaining as well as they should.
- School leaders have carried out a thorough and detailed evaluation of the school's effectiveness, but this is insufficiently focused on outcomes. The evaluation sometimes overemphasises the changes being made without adequately recognising the rates of progress and standards pupils are currently reaching. These are not yet high enough for the school to be good.
- The school's self-evaluation has not focused on several key areas that need rapid improvement. In particular, staff have not yet identified precisely enough what it is about pupils' writing and mathematics that needs to be improved. Nor has there been due recognition of the low expectations in teaching: lessons in all of the subjects do not have consistently deep and challenging enough content for the pupils.
- The school's action plan, written with local authority support, is not targeted sharply enough to bring rapid improvement in outcomes for pupils in key aspects such as writing. The same applies to subject action plans. These list what is being done to develop practice or acquire new learning resources, but lack precise impact measures, so that it is not possible to check what difference the actions taken have made to the pupils' achievement.
- The school spends its pupil premium funding appropriately on a range of activities and resources. Staff are making some changes to the teaching methods they use with these pupils in the light of experience. However, the school has too little evidence of the impact of this expenditure on the outcomes for the pupils to inform strategic planning accurately.
- The school, on its two sites, is still a young and growing entity; at the time of the last inspection, there were no Year 6 pupils. Working with governors and the local authority, the headteacher has made sensible decisions about restructuring the school and its leadership, thus building the school's capacity for future improvement. However, the structure is still not complete. It is of concern to some parents that there is not currently a senior leader based at the Abinger site.
- Senior and subject leaders are new in their roles. The assistant headteacher and the inclusion leader provide much useful support to the headteacher. The subject leaders for English and mathematics are working very hard and have imaginative ideas. They are as yet unsure, however, of what they need to do to lead their subjects to good effect. The same applies to the leaders of the other subjects. The school has rightly arranged training for subject leaders for next year.
- The school manages the support for newly qualified teachers effectively. These staff are making a full contribution and receive suitable local training and guidance.
- The school manages provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs increasingly successfully. Strengths and weaknesses in provision are accurately identified. The inclusion leader is usefully supporting staff in making improvements to help pupils make better progress in lessons and interventions. However, this is at an early stage.
- The school provides a broad and interesting curriculum which pupils enjoy. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils were interested in a 'Space' topic; the corridors outside their classrooms were strikingly converted into an imaginative, starry space station. The curriculum includes stimulating residential and day visits and a 'forest school'. There is also an enjoyable range of activities out of school hours.
- The school manages to keep learning experiences as consistent as possible for the younger year groups working in parallel on different sites. However, parents note that one site lacks the after-school club that is present on the other site.
- The school provides informative newsletters and information about the curriculum, which parents appreciate. However, some parents also feel that sometimes their communications about their own children are not passed on, or responded to, very quickly.
- The school receives a high level of support from the local authority. The headteacher listens carefully to advice and acts on it. The support and advice have helped the school to make necessary strategic changes to build its capacity to achieve sustainable improvement. This improvement has begun but the local authority has not been able to ensure that it has been fast enough to make the school good at this time.

■ The governance of the school

- The governing body is appropriately organised and clearly led by its Chair, working with an advanced skills governor. It has improved its work recently after a review. Governors receive useful training. They know the school very well, visiting frequently. They ensure that the performance management of staff, and pay progression, are handled correctly and positively. Helpfully, individual governors are assigned to particular areas, such as special educational needs and safeguarding.
- Governors are highly committed, often asking sharp and astute questions of senior staff. On occasion, they are inclined to accept answers at face value on important matters such as the quality of teaching and pupils' progress without further probing. They have not required, for example, that the impact of pupil premium expenditure is adequately evaluated. This means that they are not clear enough about how good the school currently is.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel very secure and well looked after. They are kept as safe as is possible. The site is kept secure. There are well organised procedures for child protection. Staff are well trained in safeguarding and are very aware of the importance of this.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- In many subjects and lessons, including writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2, teachers expect too little of their pupils and provide insufficient challenge.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to undertake substantial writing tasks so that they can practise and apply their literacy skills as they learn them.
- In mathematics, examples were seen of lessons which were enjoyable and well managed, but where pupils did not have to do enough challenging mathematical thinking. For example, in a practical lesson on the properties of solid shapes, pupils did not learn enough about mathematics in the time available.
- This lack of challenge is also found across other subjects. Although pupils enjoy their lessons in the foundation subjects, including the humanities, arts, physical education and science, the work is sometimes too easy. For example, a geography lesson about going to school in India, although presented in a lively way, was insufficiently demanding and did not require higher-order geographical thinking by pupils.
- Some weaknesses were seen in teachers' subject expertise, specifically in their understanding of what pupils need to do to achieve highly. As a consequence some assessments are inaccurate so that staff and school leaders do not have a full picture of pupils' attainment and rates of progress.
- Most lessons interest and engage the pupils. Staff and pupils have positive relationships. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations.
- Teaching in mathematics and writing in Reception and Key Stage 1 is better than it is in Key Stage 2. This is because the teachers are clear about the standards expected. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is effective in Reception and Key Stage 1.
- The teaching of reading across the school is well organised and successful. Pupils understandably like the attractive library provision. Mostly, pupils enjoy taking their reading books home and sharing these with adults regularly. Some pupils said that the books they were reading were not interesting to them.
- The headteacher has led and considerably emphasised improvements in the quality of marking of pupils' work across the school. Pupils value this. In the early part of the school day, pupils have useful opportunities to respond to teachers' marking and improve their work. They do not always carry this out thoroughly, however, and staff do not check up on this systematically.
- The school sets suitable homework for pupils. Some of this is open-ended, involving research. Parents like this but some say that it can take too long to complete.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Attendance is above the national average. It is good for all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs.

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their spiritual and moral development is supported well through the school's Christian foundation. For example, in an assembly, a member of staff gave a very clear and appropriate message about the mystery of advent and Christmas.
- Pupils feel secure. Parents are very positive about how well the school keeps their children safe and happy. Child protection procedures are very well established and understood.
- Pupils have good opportunities to serve and lead within the school community, which they like. These roles include school councillors, peer mentors, house captains and play leaders.
- Pupils can explain, at appropriate levels, how to keep themselves and others safe, for example when crossing the road and when using the internet.
- The school works well in providing pastoral support to pupils and families when needed. When pupils have particular needs, or may be especially vulnerable, the school is quick to act. Staff involve external agencies effectively when needed. They chase up vigorously in the event of a slow response from an agency.
- Pupils learn well about fundamental British values. For example, in the aftermath of the Paris shootings, staff explained thoughtfully to pupils what had happened, taking account of different age groups, drawing out key messages sensitively, including the importance of tolerance. Pupils are taught appropriately about people of different faiths, cultures and traditions.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very kind and polite to each other and to adults. They move calmly, considerately and sensibly around the school. In the assembly observed at the Westcott site, pupils entered and left the hall very calmly. They listened quietly and attentively.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, showing real interest in their learning. They listen attentively to their teachers. They work well independently and in groups, usually sustaining good levels of concentration. Occasionally, when the teaching is less inspiring, their attention wanders, but there is no disruption of lessons.
- Pupils really enjoy their breaktimes and playtimes. They play well and thoughtfully together. Some pupils very helpfully act as play leaders. Pupils enjoy choosing and using the readily available apparatus such as hoops, skipping ropes, stilts and climbing apparatus. The playgrounds are real havens of secure and active fun.
- Pupils wear their uniforms smartly and their 'reward hats' with enjoyment.
- Bullying is very rare in the school and pupils interviewed had no concerns about bullying. They trust the staff to deal promptly with any unpleasant behaviour, should it occur.
- The rate of pupil exclusion is low. The school's records show clearly why exclusion has very occasionally been used in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Year 6 pupils did not do well enough in their national tests in 2015. The same was true in 2014. In particular, results were too low in writing and mathematics. Too few pupils made or exceeded the expected rates of progress. In reading, the results were better, about in line with the national average.
- The pupils who are now in Years 5 and 6 are beginning to do somewhat better. However, the standard of work is not yet securely and consistently good and progress is still not rapid enough to ensure that they achieve as well as they can by the end of Year 6. The quality of their writing, for example, is very mixed. Pupils individually and through the school use a mixed range of handwriting styles.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils fared well in their national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015. Year 1 pupils, now in Year 2, reached higher than average standards in the 2015 national phonics screening.
- Current Year 2 pupils are achieving at an appropriate level. For example, in one lesson observed, they were successful when undertaking tasks about telling the time. The teacher provided different and challenging work to different groups depending on their needs.
- Lower-attaining Year 2 pupils who read to inspectors showed strong knowledge of letter sounds and blends. They sounded out tricky words correctly and showed developing skills in comprehension.
- The progress and outcomes for pupils entitled to the support of pupil premium funding, right across the school, are very mixed. In some year groups, the gaps between these and other pupils are closing but in

others this is not the case. Large gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their classmates exist in some year groups, especially in Key Stage 2. The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and pupils nationally was wide in the 2015 national assessments.

- The school does not know enough about how well the pupils are doing in the subjects beyond English and mathematics. Rightly, the headteacher has recognised the need to develop assessment processes in these foundation subjects.

The early years provision

is good

- The two classes with Reception pupils, which are on different sites, are interesting, safe and stimulating for the children. They are places of good learning, both indoors and in the quite small outdoor areas. Staff provide a good balance of activities across all the areas of learning.
- Children enjoy their learning and can sustain good levels of concentration. They work and play well together, showing concern for each other and learning to take turns. They make choices about what to do and which equipment to use, under suitable adult guidance. For example, some children chose to think up and write rhyming words. They did this successfully and with enjoyment.
- Because of the way the classrooms are arranged, some resources are unnecessarily out of the children's reach.
- Adults question children well in order to encourage them to think more deeply. They explain things clearly.
- Staff assess children's learning regularly and in depth. They use these assessments, the views of parents and the children's interests shrewdly to plan and design learning activities which stimulate the children and help them to learn well.
- The current system for recording assessments is disjointed, making assessments hard to understand or refer to quickly. Some assessments are written down as wordy marking on the children's work. The children cannot read or understand this marking.
- So far this year, the children have made good progress in all areas of learning from their varied starting points. The same was true last year, when more children than the average reached a good level of development.
- The early years provision is well managed. Staff from both sites plan effectively together to ensure consistency. The leader of early years, and other staff, show good understanding of the early years curriculum and the children's needs.
- Children are looked after well. They feel confident and safe. They are very keen to talk about their activities and all that they have learned.

School details

Unique reference number	135953
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10005698

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 aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Evelyn
Headteacher	Jennie Ratcliff
Telephone number	01306 881136
Website	www.surreyhillsprimaryschool.org.uk
Email address	westcott@surreyhills.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 November 2011

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized, growing, primary school. It operates on two sites. The Westcott site caters for pupils in all year groups. The Abinger site accommodates pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- In 2014 the school just met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The school has a smaller than average proportion of disadvantaged pupils entitled to the support of pupil premium funding.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is about average.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was originally a short inspection, lasting for one day. This is standard for schools which were graded good at their previous inspections. The lead inspector converted the inspection to a full inspection, lasting two days, with further inspectors joining the team. This was to in order to gather further necessary evidence.
- Inspectors observed lessons in all year groups and on both sites. Some of these observations were made jointly with senior staff. They looked at pupils' work and attended an assembly. They heard some pupils read.
- They spoke with pupils, members of staff, governors, parents and a representative of the local authority. They observed at playtimes and as pupils moved around the school.
- They scrutinised key documents. These included minutes of meetings, plans, reports on the school and the school's own evaluations.
- Inspectors took further account of the views of staff and pupils through looking at the confidential responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire. They noted carefully the opinions of parents from 111 responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christopher Wood	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clare Beswick	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Shields	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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