

Singleton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	125993
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	395509
Inspection dates	12–13 July 2012
Lead inspector	Jane Chesterfield

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Scott
Headteacher	Christopher Todd
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Chesterfield

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by four different teachers and spent five hours in class. She held meetings with groups of pupils, senior staff and governors, and listened to pupils reading. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including data on attainment, tracking and monitoring records, school self-evaluation and improvement planning, pupils' books and documentation relating to safeguarding. She analysed questionnaires returned by 24 parents and carers, five staff and 23 pupils.

Information about the school

Singleton Church of England Primary is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low compared with the national average, and so is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations set by the government. Pupils are taught in three classes: the infant class, comprising Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, and two Key Stage 2 classes, one covering Years 3 and 4, and the other Years 5 and 6. The current headteacher has been in post since January 2011. There is a privately-run playgroup on the school site, which is subject to separate inspection arrangements. This report can be found on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school where pupils achieve well. It is not yet outstanding because achievement in writing is not as good as in mathematics and reading, and because there is inconsistency in the quality of marking, target setting and feedback to pupils.
- Pupils make good progress from below-average starting points to reach broadly average standards by the time they leave the school. Achievement in mathematics has been consistently good in recent years, and the school's current 'Year of Reading' has brought about marked improvement in this area. The school now plans to build on this success to raise achievement in writing, where pupils often lack the skills and opportunities to produce well-crafted and well-presented work.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school and sometimes outstanding in the infant class. Teachers have a lively and enthusiastic approach which transmits itself to the pupils. Questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding, and lessons are reshaped where necessary to ensure that all learn effectively. However, the quality of marking and target setting is inconsistent across the school, so that pupils do not always know how to improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and relationships across the school are excellent. Pupils have an appetite for learning and are eager to be independent in their work.
- Leadership and management of the school are good. Performance of staff and pupils is carefully monitored and weaknesses acted upon. Improvements in tracking procedures identified the need to develop reading skills, and the increased focus on this with pupils and their parents and carers has proved very effective.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the success of the 'Year of Reading' to raise achievement in writing by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write at length for a range of purposes
 - improving the structure and presentation of pupils' written work and their use of grammar, vocabulary and punctuation.
- Improve the consistency in the quality of marking and target setting so that pupils have a clear understanding of, and involvement in, what they need to do to make progress in their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Very small cohorts of typically fewer than 10 pupils mean that there is often considerable variation in their abilities and attainment year on year. Nonetheless, children generally enter the Reception year with a level of skills below that expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. There is an improving picture of attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, thanks to changes in staff deployment in the infant class which have strengthened teamwork and support for pupils. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in the infant class, for example, pupils worked busily and independently in four different groups measuring distances, timing activities, exploring probability and devising mathematical games with the help of four members of staff who guided them to find out things for themselves. Children in the Reception year reach levels which are broadly in line with expectations for their age, while Year 2 pupils are now reaching standards which are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. They are keen readers, motivated by the challenges and competitions introduced during the 'Year of Reading', and are confident about tackling unfamiliar words and talking about the texts they are reading.

While pupils have consistently achieved well in mathematics throughout the school, improvement in reading has been more recent. Pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school, but attainment in writing is lower than in the other subjects. Pupils' books show that they occasionally lack skills in grammar, punctuation and sentence structure, do not always use an adventurous vocabulary and do not always present their English written work neatly. This contrasts with their science and topic work books in which their presentation is often immaculate. Pupils use their writing skills effectively across the curriculum, but do not always write at length. They enjoy opportunities to be creative, such as writing new words to the song 'My Favourite Things' in the Years 5 and 6 class, and are keen to volunteer their ideas in discussions. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are given

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effective support within the mixed-age classes. Parents and carers feel sure that their children make good progress and pupils say that they learn a lot at school.

Quality of teaching

Teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects, their thorough use of assessment and their understanding of their pupils' needs are key factors leading to consistently good teaching in the school. An art lesson on the proportions of the human body in the Years 5 and 6 class, for example, led to high-quality drawings from the pupils, because the teacher explained the necessary techniques in a clear, memorable and well-illustrated fashion, bringing in pupils' suggestions along the way. Meanwhile, in the Years 3 and 4 class, the teacher's good questioning and assessment of pupils' understanding led to the use of very practical ways of explaining how to construct sentences with connectives. Pupils, representing the different parts of the sentence, moved around at the front of the class to show how word order could be varied.

In the infant class there are particular strengths in the teamwork of the teachers and teaching assistants, and in the planning for pupils' independent learning, exploration and discovery. There is good provision throughout the school for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, thanks to the lively approach of teachers and a curriculum which is wide-ranging and full of enrichment.

Marking of pupils' books is regular, and some pupils know their targets for improvement, but the picture is not consistent across the school. This means that pupils do not always know what they are meant to be doing to improve their work, and they are not always expected to correct the work they have done or act upon teachers' suggestions for improvement. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from well-targeted support so that they make similar progress to their classmates. All parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire believe their children are well taught, and pupils feel that they are helped to do as well as they can.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

School records, inspection observations, and parents' and carers' views confirm that the behaviour of pupils over time is outstanding. There have been no exclusions in recent years, and no racist incidents have been recorded. Pupils are natural, outgoing and friendly, and mix easily with those of different ages in class and in the playground. Older pupils take it for granted that they should support younger ones. When asked if they had responsibilities for looking after younger children, one Year 6 pupil replied, 'Well, we would do that anyway.' Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and say that if this type of behaviour occurs, the school deals with it immediately and effectively.

In class, pupils display excellent attitudes to learning, showing a genuine desire to apply themselves to their tasks and work independently at the earliest opportunity. In assemblies they are focused and respectful. Attendance has been consistently well

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above average in recent years. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say that their children feel safe at school, that their children are well looked after, and that there is a good standard of behaviour at the school.

Leadership and management

In the 18 months that he has been at the school, the headteacher has gained a good insight into the school's strengths and areas for development. Self-evaluation is accurate and insightful, and school improvement planning targets the right priorities. The improvement in tracking procedures highlighted the need to improve achievement in reading, and this has been successfully addressed. Changes in the deployment of staff, for example using two teachers rather than one in the infant class, have led to improvement in provision and outcomes. Planned staff coverage for next year, when a very experienced teacher will be replaced by a newly qualified teacher, has been carefully thought through to promote the professional development of all staff. Capacity for future improvement is strong.

Governors are very supportive of the school and have a good understanding of their role. They are keen to develop their skills and take full advantage of all training opportunities. Safeguarding requirements are fully met, and the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination effectively.

The curriculum inspires and motivates pupils. Key Stage 2 pupils, for example, were proud to show the work they had done on the Queen's Jubilee and the Olympic Games. This developed their skills across the curriculum, from testing recipes for coronation chicken to writing poems about gymnastics. In science, meanwhile, they had made the link with their literacy work on Shakespeare's *Macbeth* by working out whether the items in the witches' cauldron were solids, liquids or gases. Pupils in the infant class were eager to point out their rainforest corner, talk about the rainforest 'top trumps' cards they had made themselves, and describe the spices from the rainforest they had brought in to display. The school's good use of partnerships broadens pupils' experiences and contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their links with schools in Africa and France increase their awareness of other cultures, while local links enable pupils to enjoy unforgettable occasions such as study days on the Downs, singing in Chichester Cathedral and a visit to the Olympic torch relay.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Singleton Church of England Primary School, Singleton, PO18 0HP

Thank you for being so welcoming when I visited your school recently, and for helping me with the inspection. I really enjoyed visiting your lessons, talking to you and looking at your work. Thanks as well to those of you who completed a questionnaire, took part in a discussion group or came to read to me.

I found that your school is a good school and is giving you a good start to your education. These are some of the things I liked about it.

- You make good progress because you are well taught. I agree with your views that you learn a lot and are helped to do as well as you can, though you do not always get clear guidance on how to improve your work.
- You reach broadly average standards by the time you leave the school, but you do better in mathematics and reading than you do in writing.
- You told me that you feel very safe in school, and that you feel that any bullying is well handled, and I agree.
- Your behaviour is outstanding, and you are very enthusiastic about your learning.
- Relationships in the school are excellent and you are very supportive of one another.
- Your school is well led, and you enjoy an interesting curriculum with many opportunities to develop new skills and talents.

So that the school can improve further, this is what I have asked the staff to do.

- Help you improve your writing skills and give you plenty of opportunities to practise these.
- Make sure that the marking in your books sets out clearly what you need to do to improve your work, and gives you targets to reach.

You can help by always presenting your written work as neatly as you can.

Yours sincerely
Jane Chesterfield
Lead inspector

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