

Castlecombe Primary School

Castlecombe Road, Mottingham, London SE9 4AT

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has established a culture of high expectations for staff and pupils. As a result, the school is providing a good quality of education and continuing to improve.
- Leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of the school's performance and are ambitious to improve further.
- Leaders check regularly on the progress that pupils are making. They identify dips and respond to issues effectively.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result, the majority of pupils currently in the school make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils benefit from an interesting, broad curriculum within and beyond the school day.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged make good progress from their starting points.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. Effective teaching enables pupils to gain early reading skills and use this knowledge when they read and write independently.
- Pupils read with interest and enjoyment. They can describe in detail what they like about the book they are reading and have successful strategies to tackle the more difficult words.
- Pupils behave well and show good attitudes to learning. They are polite and welcoming. Pupils of all ages work and play well together.
- Pupils' well-being and safeguarding are high priorities. Pupils feel very safe in school.
- Pupils enjoy the school and attendance is now in line with the national average. Leaders have worked tirelessly to reduce pupils' absence.
- High expectations, effective teaching and caring relationships help children in the early years to make good progress. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- Inconsistencies in the way a few teachers use assessment information to plan learning activities mean that some activities are not challenging enough, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently use effective questioning to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes by:
 - making sure that all teachers give pupils tasks that are suitably challenging, particularly for the most able pupils
 - ensuring that questioning is consistently highly effective in deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - teachers learning from best practice in this school and other schools where teaching is outstanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- From the time of her appointment in September 2017, the headteacher has raised expectations at all levels. She is committed to achieving strong academic outcomes and the highest standards of care for all pupils. This commitment is shared by her team and has led to significant improvements for pupils since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's effectiveness and provide detailed information to governors. The school development plan accurately identifies the areas for improvement.
- The school has overhauled its assessment system for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers have received professional development to ensure that their assessment is accurate. External verification has validated teachers' judgements. This means that teachers and leaders now have an accurate picture of how well pupils are doing. As a result, additional support is well directed and progress has improved for the pupils receiving it.
- Pupils with SEND and those that are disadvantaged receive precisely targeted support. Additional funding is used effectively to support their academic, emotional and physical well-being. These groups of pupils make strong overall progress, they have positive attitudes to learning and their attendance is good.
- Staff are very positive about their work in the school and morale is high. Newly qualified teachers receive good support and training and said that they are proud to work at Castlecombe Primary School.
- Leaders have brought in effective strategies to strengthen pupils' progress in reading. These include a systematic use of the school's library to encourage pupils to read. There is also an expectation that pupils will read at home frequently. Leaders encourage parents and carers to support this through the use of a home-school reading record book. Leaders also make focused use of teaching assistants to provide structured support for pupils who are less confident with their reading.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It has a clear intent and contributes well to pupils' overall development. Leaders enhance it with a wide range of other activities that provide pupils with opportunities and experiences they might not otherwise access. They support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Leaders also provide pupils with opportunities to develop a good understanding of fundamental British values and equalities through a variety of activities. These include assemblies, visits from speakers and lessons in religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility in their leadership roles, for example as school councillors, and by raising money for various charities.
- The sport premium is used effectively. Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to a range of sporting activities and provide development opportunities for teaching staff. Pupils appreciate the opportunities that they have to be physically active, and to participate in competitive sport.
- Leaders recognise that a few teachers do not consistently make best use of assessment

information to plan or adapt activities so that they provide the right levels of challenge for all pupils. As a result, some pupils do not always make as much progress in some classes as in others. Some pupils also lose focus on their learning.

- Leaders regularly observe lessons, scrutinise pupils' work and track their progress. They use their findings to arrange suitable training to help teachers and other members of staff to enhance their practice and to hold them to account for their pupils' progress. As a result, the quality of teaching across the key stages is improving and pupils make good progress. Nevertheless, teachers do not routinely observe best practice found in the school and in outstanding schools. This limits their opportunities to broaden their training to become consistently outstanding teachers.
- Parents are generally positive about the school. Most parents who spoke to inspectors said it has improved dramatically in the past two years. They are particularly happy with leaders' work to improve both the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is provided by the local committee. The local committee is ambitious and shares the headteacher's commitment to securing the highest standards of care and academic progress for pupils. The local committee ensures that its statutory duties are met, including those for safeguarding.
- Local committee members have a secure understanding of standards in the school. They visit regularly and receive detailed information from leaders. Minutes of meetings confirm that members ask searching questions about a wide range of matters, including finance and pupils' performance. They are effective in holding leaders to account and ensuring that leaders secure good progress for pupils of the school. Members clearly articulate the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Leaders in the multi-academy trust provide effective challenge and support for the school. Their evaluation of the school is accurate and has enabled leaders to refine their plans for how they will continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in this area. Staff know the signs of abuse and what to do if they have concerns about a pupil. They know their pupils well and are alert to any changes in their behaviour or demeanour.
- The school's required record of checks on members of staff is thorough and complies with the government's guidance. The school's safeguarding policy is current and comprehensive and is consistent with the government's most recent advice.
- Careful records are kept of all concerns raised and actions taken. Leaders work very closely with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure that pupils and their families receive timely and effective help and support.
- Pupils feel safe in school and value the support of teachers and other adults. Pupils demonstrate a good awareness of the actions they can take to keep themselves safe online and when walking to and from school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The headteacher and her team have achieved significant improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This enables the large majority of pupils to make good and improving progress from their starting points.
- Teachers have developed classroom environments where pupils are willing to share their answers and opinions and are not deterred if their initial responses are incorrect. In their verbal interactions and in their written comments, teachers encourage pupils to learn from their mistakes as a vital part of the learning process.
- Teachers are mindful of the need to challenge pupils and are often very successful in doing this, as shown in pupils' mathematics books and in their writing. At times, teachers are less successful in using their knowledge of pupils and assessment information to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils from all groups, but the most able in particular, do not always make the best progress that they could.
- Pupils with SEND, who are disadvantaged or who have fallen behind receive strong support from teachers and teaching assistants. As a result of these well-planned learning activities, pupils are able to catch up and make strong progress from their different starting points.
- Teaching assistants provide high levels of support for pupils. They know their pupils well and work closely with them to enhance their learning. Teaching assistants are aware of pupils' attentiveness, knowing when to prompt and when to allow pupils to work independently. Their work makes a positive contribution to the strong progress made by pupils with SEND.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. Teaching is engaging and planned with precision so that pupils are building on what they already know. Teachers use good questioning and subject knowledge to support the development of pupils' early reading and writing skills. Pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are given a range of opportunities to develop their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills. There have been clear improvements in pupils' calculation skills and mathematical fluency since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have revitalised the reading culture to improve standards of reading. Teachers work with parents to encourage pupils to read at home through the meaningful use of reading journals. In class, pupils read a wider range of texts and have regular opportunities to read independently. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils used effective reading strategies to read clearly to inspectors. Pupils demonstrate highly enthusiastic attitudes to reading and very much enjoy using their school library.
- Teachers at key stage 1 use questioning effectively to extend and develop pupils' understanding. However, key stage 2 teachers, at times, are not sufficiently skilled in extending and deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding, particularly for the most able. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy learning. They are confident and self-assured learners.
- The school promotes the emotional health and well-being of its pupils. The nurture room has provided an ideal support for those pupils with more complex emotional needs. It is helping pupils to self-regulate their behaviour and develop their independence. This enables pupils to successfully engage with learning and wider aspects of school life.
- Pupils are given a range of responsibilities as school councillors, librarians and in managing activities on the playground. They develop their social confidence through regular trips and opportunities to interact with visitors.
- Pupils know the school's rules and values and how they help them to become good learners. For example, values of 'tolerant turtle and respectful raccoon' reinforce positive learning behaviours.
- The curriculum promotes healthy eating and physical activity. Pupils enjoy very active breaktimes and lunchtimes and can explain the importance of regular exercise.
- Pupils say that incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying, are rare. They have confidence that bullying would be dealt with effectively. The school's internal systems for recording poor behaviour demonstrate that there are few instances of persistent or targeted unkindness. The school's records show that, when they do occur, leaders take them seriously and check that they are properly resolved.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Teachers encourage positive behaviours and routines from the early years onwards. Pupils show care and consideration towards one another and adults. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff are strong and trusting.
- Pupils move around the school site in a calm and orderly manner. They play sociably with each other on the playground. The playground is spacious and has a range of interesting activities and resources available. Pupils make the most of their breaktimes and enjoy the facilities available to them.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They cooperate well with their teachers and other adults. They readily work independently, in pairs or groups, as directed by their teachers. They are keen to succeed. These attitudes make a positive contribution to their successful learning. Nevertheless, in a small number of lessons, their attention wanders and they occasionally lose concentration.
- Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection because pupils enjoy school and particularly enjoy learning. Leaders closely monitor pupils' attendance and systems for supporting families and they are rigorous in following up attendance

concerns. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The typically good and improving teaching means that pupils make strong progress from their varied starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. This is demonstrated in their books and in the school's records of individual pupils' progress. Their progress, positive attitudes and well-developed interpersonal skills prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.
- At key stage 1, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 reaching the expected standard in reading in 2018 was in line with the national average. Their attainment in writing and mathematics was above the national average.
- At key stage 2, standards in writing continued to be above the national average in 2018. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics was also above the national average, but attainment in reading was below average. Progress in writing and mathematics was stronger than in reading.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, by the end of Year 6, is above the national average.
- New strategies and higher expectations are enabling pupils to make much stronger progress in reading. Pupils are keen and increasingly perceptive readers. Teachers have developed pupils' inference and deduction skills, leading to much improved progress in reading across key stages.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and Year 1 is good. Over the past three years, achievement in phonics in Year 1 has been consistently above the national average. The youngest pupils read with enthusiasm, sounding out words using their phonics skills and anticipating what is coming next in a story.
- The achievement of pupils with SEND is good because of the well-planned curriculum and the quality of teaching and support from teaching assistants.
- Currently, pupils make strong progress from their starting points across the curriculum. There is no difference between the progress that disadvantaged pupils make and that of other pupils.
- Pupils demonstrate good understanding in a range of subjects other than English and mathematics. For example, pupils show that they have developed the ability to carry out scientific investigations and draw correct conclusions in science. Assessment systems in subjects other than English and mathematics are being developed. However, at present, some teachers' assessments are not helping pupils to progress as quickly as they could.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader took on the role in September 2018. She quickly identified areas for improvement and put in place actions to improve further the already effective provision.
- The majority of children join the school with knowledge and skills below those that are

typical for their age. However, strong progress during the early years means that they quickly catch up.

- The proportion of children who attain a good level of development at the end of Reception is consistently in line with the national average. Most children make good or better progress from low starting points. This includes children who speak English as an additional language, disadvantaged children, those with SEND and the most able.
- Staff make careful observations of what children can do during their first weeks in Nursery and Reception. They quickly identify children's learning needs and put effective strategies in place to support their development. Staff ask questions which extend children's thinking.
- Staff liaise closely with parents, who praise the staff's commitment to the health and well-being of their children.
- Both the indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced and provide children with a variety of opportunities for exploration and learning. Children are inquisitive, and adults encourage them to try things out for themselves.
- The good progress of children currently in the early years is evident in their learning journals. For example, some children are now attempting to write whole sentences compared to mark-making at the beginning of the year.
- Staff constantly assess and monitor the progress children are making. Additional support is readily available for children who need it. Early reading interventions are delivered by knowledgeable staff. As a result, children of all abilities make good or better progress.
- Safeguarding practices are highly effective. The strong safeguarding culture that characterises the school's work is similarly evident in the early years. All expected requirements are met.
- Staff have established effective learning behaviours. Children behave well, both in the classroom and the outside area. Pupils cooperate well with each other and engage in lively chatter as they work and play, sharing their ideas with each other.
- By the time they leave Reception, children behave well and have grasped the basics of reading, writing and mathematics. This means they are well prepared for the demands of Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	140533
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10054409

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Bernard Hawes
Headteacher	Rachel Haig
Telephone number	0208 857 1504
Website	www.castlecombe.bromley.sch.uk
Email address	admin.office@castlecombe.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 November 2016

Information about this school

- Castlecombe Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Spring Partnership Trust, a multi-academy trust. The academy trust is governed by a trust board. The trustees have established a local governing committee for each of their schools. Castlecombe Primary School and Dorset Road Infant School share the same local governing committee.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average and the proportion with SEND is also above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is in line with the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work from all year groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and other teachers. They also met with four governors and the chief executive of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read. They spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally during lessons, and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation provided by leaders, including internal assessment information for pupils, leaders' self-evaluation, development plans, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance and behaviour information, a variety of school policies, the single central record of recruitment checks and a wide range of other information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors talked with parents at the beginning of both days and considered the 19 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff through the 24 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Carolyn Dickinson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ann Pratt

Ofsted Inspector

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