

Archbishop Courtenay Church of England Primary School

Ecclestone Road, Tovil, Maidstone, ME15 6QN

Inspection dates 5-6 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils have not made consistently good progress in English and mathematics. The current rate of progress in some classes is not sufficiently rapid to enable pupils to make up lost ground rapidly.
- Teaching has improved but is not effective enough to ensure all pupils make good progress over time.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are improving but where teaching is weaker, some pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently positive, and this limits their learning.
- Tasks and activities do not consistently engage and motivate pupils to learn as well as they might.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders have improved teaching and accelerated pupils' progress at an impressive rate.
- Morale is high among staff and the training and support they have received has been effective in improving their skills.
- This is an inclusive community where pupils feel safe and valued.
- Governance is good.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the Nursery.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils’ current progress, improvement planning, the use of pupil premium and sports funding, checks carried out by leaders on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited 15 lessons, including 11 that were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils. They listened to pupils read aloud and talked to them about their work.
- They discussed the work of the school with senior leaders, members of the interim executive board, a representative from the diocese and a local authority representative.
- The inspection team reviewed the responses to 33 staff questionnaires completed during the inspection. They also listened to the views of a range of school staff.
- The team analysed the 29 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and held discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- Evidence from monitoring inspections in March, June and November 2013 was also taken in to account.

Inspection team

Robert Ellis, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Jane Wotherspoon

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- When the school was inspected in November 2012 it was deemed to require special measures. Improvements were required to teaching and leadership and management at all levels.
- The governing body has been replaced by an interim executive board. The school operates as part of a federation of schools.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds with the greatest proportion being those from White British heritage.
- Most pupils speak English as their main language but the proportion that is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language has increased since the last inspection.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs identified at school action is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils identified at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is twice the national average.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club which was also inspected.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring teachers engage, challenge and motivate pupils, particularly the most able
 - providing pupils with planned opportunities to respond to marking and improve their work
 - providing work that is linked to activities so pupils can use and apply their knowledge and skills to solve realistic problems.
- Develop pupils' attitudes to learning so that they are consistently positive in all subjects, take pride in their work and are motivated to achieve well.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are lower than those which are typical for their ages, particularly their language, communication and social skills. Achievement is not yet good because a significant minority of older pupils are working at levels which are two years below what is typical for their ages.
- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and are prepared well for starting in Reception. Well-planned activities and good support from adults are helping children catch up with others nationally by the time they start Year 1.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the previous inspection but this does not represent good progress, given the pupils' starting points and capabilities.
- Standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 were disappointing and too few pupils made good progress.
- Since September 2013, improvements across the school have resulted in pupils making much better progress and many have started to close the gap in the standards expected for their ages. The best progress has been made in improving pupils' writing.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are supported well and in some classes the gaps in attainment between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils have closed. However, progress varies across classes and some gaps remain and are closing at a slower rate.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive the help and support they need to make good progress. Evidence from school information and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that some of these pupils are making particularly good progress.
- Pupils who arrive at the school speaking very little English are supported well and make rapid progress in developing the language skills they need to be successful.
- The most able pupils have previously underperformed but because of better teaching and higher expectations, many of these pupils are now making the progress necessary to achieve the higher levels of attainment by the end of each key stage.
- Despite the recent improvements many pupils still have a legacy of previous underperformance to overcome.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable, and there is not enough that is consistently good to ensure all pupils make good progress in all classes and subjects.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve but, on occasions, work is not challenging enough for the most able pupils.
- Pupils' books are marked regularly and teachers provide helpful advice. Some pupils take advantage of this advice and guidance to improve their work but others do not.
- Most teachers use questioning well to deepen pupils' understanding or to gauge how much pupils have understood.
- In the best teaching, teachers plan work carefully so that it challenges all pupils, including the most able. Where teaching is less effective, the tasks and activities are not matched as well to pupils' starting points and capabilities and pupils do not have enough opportunity to think for themselves and work out how to solve the problems they have been set.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils underpin good learning. Established routines and consistent management of behaviour ensure an atmosphere that promotes learning and mutual respect.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults know the children well and provide good opportunities for developing language skills. For example, Nursery children enjoy a range of activities including making things and role play. Adults intervene when appropriate to ask

questions, document progress and help move the children's learning on to the next level.

- Pupils have too few opportunities to use and apply their knowledge and skills. In Year 4 and Year 6, pupils were working on activities that related to the school allotments and developing an outside classroom. This gave them good opportunities to develop their measuring and calculation skills in an appropriate context.
- Most lessons interest and engage pupils. However, in a few classes tasks are mundane and good use is not made of the time that is available so pupils do not learn as much as they might. Year 6 pupils, who were working on an environmental project with the Kent Wildlife Trust, were really enthused and excited by the tasks and activities that they were involved in. As a result, they made very good progress and enjoyed learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because pupils' attitudes to learning are not always positive enough to support good progress in all subjects. Attitudes tend to be better where expectations are very high and work is challenging.
- Pupils sometimes lose interest and need prompting by adults before they continue with their work. Too often, pupils will stop if they encounter a problem and wait for an adult to come to help them.
- Behaviour around the school is generally good. Pupils are polite, mix well together and move sensibly around the building. Pupils, parents and staff raised no concerns about behaviour and most acknowledge the significant improvement that has taken place since the previous inspection.
- The school's behaviour logs show that learning is seldom interrupted by behaviour issues. The school is successful in promoting equality of opportunity and pupils say discrimination of any sort would not be tolerated.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils say they feel safe and are cared for well. Parents and staff agree. Pupils show that they know how to keep themselves safe around the school site and how to keep themselves safe online.
- Pupils say there is very little bullying and they are confident that any instances that were reported would be dealt with by staff. Pupils say that there are plenty of adults to talk to if they have a problem.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now close to the national average for primary schools. Most pupils are punctual to lessons.

The leadership and management

are good

- Good leadership and management have ensured that rapid progress has been made in addressing the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection. Leaders and managers at all levels have been successful in creating a culture of high expectation and continuous improvement. Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because middle leadership is not developed fully.
- Leaders and managers have focused strongly on improving teaching and learning. Observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work has enable leaders to provide teachers with clear and effective guidance and training on how to improve their teaching.
- Teachers' pay progression is closely linked to pupils' progress and whole-school development targets.
- The school devotes part of each day to teaching reading and mental mathematics so that pupils develop the skills they need. Pupils have increased opportunities to develop their reading skills and many pupils say how much they now enjoy reading. Pupils' experiences are enriched by

visitors to the school, trips to places of interest and activities in the local area. The school is developing better links with local churches and the local community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

- The school has used additional sports funding to employ professional sports coaches to work alongside classroom teachers. This is helping to improve the teaching of physical education and consequently pupils are developing sports skills and improving their fitness.
- Pupil premium funding has been used to provide a breakfast club, play therapy, a reading volunteers programme and training for staff so that they can support vulnerable pupils more effectively. These initiatives are having a positive impact on the pupils for whom the funding is intended.
- Strong partnerships with other schools and the local authority are supporting improvements to teaching.
- Senior leaders systematically review all aspects of the school's work and have an accurate picture of what is working and what needs to be improved further. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The interim executive board reviews the progress that the school is making and asks challenging questions about pupils' progress and the impact of the various initiatives that the school has introduced. Members of the board have undertaken training to ensure they have the skills and knowledge they need. The board knows about the management of staff performance and what is being done to improve the quality of teaching. Members of the board have a good understanding of the school's data and know how well the school is doing compared to other schools. They have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching across the school. Finances are given close scrutiny and statutory responsibilities to ensure pupils are safe and cared for are met. Members of the interim executive board work closely with the school's leadership and are ambitious for the school to continue to improve.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	134921
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	432608

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	
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Wendy Simmons
Headteacher	Justine Brown
Date of previous school inspection	November 2012
Telephone number	01622 754666
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