

The Canterbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136344
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	382051
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2012
Lead inspector	Julie Sackett

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The Board of Directors
Chair	Debbie Wells
Headteacher	Phil Karnavas
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	23–24 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Julie Sackett

Additional inspector

Colin Lower

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The team observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons and part lessons taught by nine teachers. Discussions were held with senior staff, teachers, members of the governing body, parents and carers and pupils. Inspectors 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 the school's improvement plan, safeguarding arrangements, policies and records of pupils' progress and attainment. The inspection team analysed 96 questionnaires from parents and carers.

Information about the school

The Canterbury Primary School is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. Due to the increasing popularity of the school, the proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at expected times is above the national average.

The school converted to academy status in October 2010 and occupies The Canterbury Campus with The Canterbury High School, as well as a range of privately-run and local authority funded facilities. Awards achieved by the school include Healthy Schools and Artsmark Gold in 2012. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Senior leaders have secured rapid improvements over the last three years and there is a shared determination to drive improvement further. A creative and innovative approach to school development, including a strong partnership with the high school, has been successful in raising expectations and in securing a year-on-year improvement in pupils' achievement so that pupils now achieve well. One parent commented, 'We have seen the school go from strength to strength.' The school is not yet outstanding because there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school. As a result, there is slight unevenness in pupils' progress.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Most pupils make good progress from their starting points. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved and is broadly in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good overall and sometimes outstanding. Typically, teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and plan well-paced lessons which enthuse and motivate pupils. In the minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, learning is not matched accurately to the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, so that progress is not maximised.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils feel very safe in school. They demonstrate respect for adults and want to do well. Improved attendance rates reflect pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Senior leaders, including the board of directors, have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and development needs. Self-evaluation procedures are robust. There is a strong focus on teaching and learning. The management of teachers' performance is very successfully combined with professional development which is tailored to school development priorities. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise pupils' achievement to outstanding by ensuring that all lessons consistently meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able.

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Main report

Achievement of pupils

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that their children are making good progress and inspection evidence supports this view. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special needs, make at least good progress overall and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. There is, however, slight variation in the progress made by pupils across the school. Pupils make slower progress where teaching is less effective.

Children join the school with skills and understanding which are generally well below expected levels for their age, but there are many variations within each cohort. Children thoroughly enjoy a range of stimulating activities which are accurately matched to their needs because adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage capitalise on children's zest for learning. Relationships are strong and there is mutual respect between children and adults. As a result, children rapidly grow in confidence, independence and self-esteem. Children demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning, often persevering with tasks until successful. Accelerated progress means that children's attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved markedly over the last two years to above average.

Pupils make good progress through Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently, in 2011, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was close to the national average and broadly average by the end of Year 6, being above average in mathematics and slightly below average in English. This represents a year-on-year improvement in attainment since 2009 and good progress from pupils' starting points. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, indicates that improvement has been sustained.

Attainment in reading is close to the national average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress in the development of reading and writing skills. The development of literacy skills starts in Reception, where planned activities provide many opportunities for cooperation and purposeful talk and children's language and social skills are effectively supported. Children are taught the link between letters and sounds (phonics) in a systematic and regular way with activities designed to make learning fun. For example, a group of Reception children enthusiastically took their turn to fly a toy parrot from one letter to the next on a letters board, effectively practising their knowledge of letter names and the sound of each letter. In Year 3, pupils were able to identify a range of techniques, such as alliteration, to make writing more effective due to the teacher's effective modelling of different features of writing. The success of this approach is evident in the quality of pupils' work. For example, one Year 2 pupil, when describing a pebble, wrote, 'My pebble has stars on it and lots of colours.' By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, they are confidently using grammatical terms when discussing how

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they can improve their writing. Skills and attitudes such as these provide pupils with a secure foundation for the next stage in their education.

Pupils' good progress in numeracy is underpinned by a curriculum that provides pupils with many opportunities to apply basic skills in different subjects, so that learning is meaningful and engaging. For example, pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically interpreted information in a graph relating to a topic on pirates. In Year 6, pupils relished the opportunity to construct two- and three-dimensional shapes in an activity related to their topic on buildings and settlements. Regular opportunities for pupils to collaborate, including opportunities for problem solving, enable pupils to verbalise their thinking and learn from each other. For example, pupils in Year 2 demonstrated excellent cooperation skills when identifying the missing numbers in a sequence and discussing the pattern.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because interventions are matched closely to individual needs. Pupils make good progress in their personal development as well as in the development of basic skills because high quality intensive support is provided by knowledgeable staff in 'The Treasure Chest'.

Quality of teaching

Almost all parents and carers who returned a questionnaire consider their children to be well taught. This is supported by inspection evidence. The quality of teaching is good overall, and sometimes outstanding, enabling pupils to achieve well. There is a small minority of lessons where teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is less effective, activities do not consistently meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, so that their progress is not maximised.

Typically, teachers' enthusiasm and confident use of subject knowledge ensure lessons which are engaging and fun, so that pupils are inspired to do their best. For example, in Reception, adults capture children's enthusiasm and plan activities, both inside and out, based on children's interests and which the children thoroughly enjoy, while a strong and consistent focus on learning is maintained. Teachers typically employ good quality questioning to evaluate pupils' understanding and to tailor subsequent learning to individual needs. In Year 3, for instance, the teacher's questioning effectively drew out and developed pupils' understanding of British history during a session in which pupils enjoyed seeing their classmates dressed in Tudor costume. The role of teaching assistants has been successfully developed so that there is a greater focus on supporting learning. This has been particularly effective in supporting the learning of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs.

Teachers consistently and successfully ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to succeed in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 competently discussed what they needed to be able to do to achieve 'bronze', 'silver' and 'gold' levels of success in their work, explaining to inspectors that the

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descriptions of what was required at each level helped them to do their best. This approach is consistently employed across the school and, combined with good quality marking, has contributed to accelerating pupils' progress, successfully enabling pupils to play an active part in their learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' behaviour is good and that pupils feel safe in school. Almost all the parents and carers who returned a questionnaire agree that their children are safe and most consider behaviour to be good. Most pupils also consider behaviour to be typically good, with one child in Reception saying, 'Everyone is nice here.' Pupils of all ages enjoy talking to visitors about their school and demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying, such as racism and cyber bullying, and have a good understanding of how they can help to keep themselves safe. Pupils told inspectors that bullying in school is rare but that, if it happens, they know what to do and are confident that adults will address any concerns quickly. School records and logs confirm this view.

While inspection evidence found that pupils' behaviour is typically good in lessons, a few parents and carers, and a small minority of pupils, feel that lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. Inspection evidence indicates that a few pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour and occasionally need adult help to do so. A whole school approach to managing behaviour ensures that expectations are consistently high and pupils have a clear understanding of how to behave in lessons and around school. Improved attendance rates are now in line with national averages and reflect pupils' increasing enjoyment of school.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders, including the board of directors, have been highly successful in securing rapid and sustained improvement. High quality partnership work between the high school and the primary school has played a significant role in the school's development. The school is strongly inclusive and leaders have effectively established an ethos of high expectations of pupils and staff and a shared drive for further development. Improvements are recognised and appreciated by parents and carers, a comment made by one parent reflecting the views of many, 'The school has made an epic improvement in the last two years.' There has been a strong focus on teaching and learning, with senior leaders playing an active part in modelling high quality teaching. The quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress is monitored and evaluated rigorously. Performance management procedures are effective and professional development is carefully targeted to address school development priorities. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement have improved. Senior leaders, including the directors, have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to improve further. These improvements and factors demonstrate the school's capacity for sustained improvement.

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The curriculum is broad and well balanced. There is increased flexibility and opportunities for teachers to use their professional judgement within the curriculum. Along with more opportunities for pupils to contribute their ideas, this has ensured that learning more accurately meets the needs and interests of the pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy school and attendance rates have improved. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as reflected in the range and quality of artwork and the school's recent achievement of Artsmark Gold. The curriculum is enriched well, including lessons taught by specialist teachers from external agencies and from Key Stage 3, which pupils told inspectors they very much enjoy.

Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and robust, including recruitment and vetting procedures. Leaders effectively ensure these meet statutory requirements so that pupils are safe and feel secure. Senior leaders and staff promote equality well and respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination, which rarely occur.

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.



25 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Canterbury Primary School, Canterbury CT2 8PT

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school when we visited you recently. We enjoyed our time in your school and talking with some of you about your views. We agree with what you that The Canterbury Primary School is a good school. These are the main reasons why it is good.

- You work hard, listen carefully to your teachers and behave well.
- Teachers make learning fun and you make good progress because they teach you well.
- The senior leaders have done a really good job in making improvements to your school so that teaching is good and you are learning well.
- Adults in the school look after you well so that you are safe.
- Senior leaders in your school know exactly what needs to be done to make the school even better.

We have asked the school to raise the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by ensuring that the work set for you meets your needs and that all of you are challenged in your learning, particularly the most able.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard. We hope you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now and wish each one of you every success in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Julie Sackett
Lead inspector

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