

Temple Mill Primary School

Cliffe Road, Rochester, ME2 3NL

Inspection dates

7–8 November 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching varies too much across the school and, as a result, the rate of pupils' progress fluctuates.
- In Years 5 and 6, too few pupils are making good progress in either English or mathematics. Boys do not attain well enough in writing.
- Although pupils reach average standards, not enough reach the higher levels in their work, especially the most able pupils, because too often the work set is too easy.
- Recent developments in teaching are not yet resulting in good progress across the school.
- Teachers do not always make clear to pupils what they will be learning or how they can improve their work.
- Senior leaders and managers do not always check the impact of actions they have taken to improve achievement.
- The new governing body does not yet know enough about the school's performance to hold senior leaders robustly to account.

The school has the following strengths

- Despite an unsettling period over the last year due largely to staff illness, leaders and managers are now beginning to provide clear direction to staff and there are early signs of improvement in teaching and pupils' progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn well because there is a good balance of practical activities and taught skills.
- Pupils' progress in Years 1 to 4 is now accelerating. Standards in English are rising rapidly.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe in school. They are polite, friendly and enjoy learning. Attendance is above the average figures for primary schools.
- Leaders have produced good quality plans to improve standards further.
- The programme of support for teachers, linked to their performance management, is now beginning to improve the overall quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher.
- In addition, inspectors heard pupils from Years 1 and 2 read, watched an assembly and observed break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at various aspects of the school's work, including documentation about safeguarding, pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. They also looked at pupils' books, planning and evaluation records, recent parents' and carers' and pupils' surveys conducted by the school, as well as minutes of the meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Helen Howard , Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Elson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. It shares its site with Temple Mill Children’s Centre, which is inspected separately.
- Since the last inspection, the school has entered into an informal partnership with a local academy.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding, which gives additional funding to those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, to children in public care and to children from service families, is average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, including those supported at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special education needs, is above average. The majority of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties or behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.
- More than one quarter of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times throughout the year.
- A very small number of pupils attend a local nurture group part time.
- In 2012, the school met the government’s floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make faster progress in English and mathematics, especially in Years 5 and 6, by:
 - making sure that activities challenge all pupils, especially the most able
 - providing activities that will encourage boys to become more interested and involved in their own writing
 - including more opportunities for using information and communication technology
 - helping pupils to learn more independently by giving them clear steps that show them precisely what they will be learning and why
 - helping pupils to check how well they have done and providing clear guidance on how they can improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - ensuring that they carefully and consistently check the impact of actions they have taken to improve the school
 - making sure that newly-appointed governors have accurate knowledge about the school so that they can hold senior leaders and managers to account
 - making governors’ visits to school more effective by agreeing consistent ways to share and use the information the governors gain.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils do not make fast enough progress, especially in Years 5 and 6. Too few pupils reach the highest available levels, especially the more able pupils, because they are not given work that is sufficiently demanding.
- Boys' attainment in writing has been a concern in recent years and remains too low in Years 5 and 6. Teaching does not always capture boys' interest and relies too heavily on the same type of activity for all pupils. There is little effective use of information and communication technology, although the school now has plans to address this.
- Children join the school with skills and abilities in line with typical expectations and, by the end of Year 6 in recent years, standards have been close to national averages. Attainment is affected year on year by the high proportions of pupils who join or leave the school partway through their education.
- Early reading skills are taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils are able to use these skills to begin to read for themselves. As they move through the school, a consistent approach helps pupils to become competent readers.
- The good progress that children have made over recent years in the Early Years Foundation Stage is leading to faster progress in Years 1 to 4. Some pupils still have gaps in their earlier learning, however, that affect their overall achievement.
- Pupils' progress in writing is improving in Years 1 to 4 because the school has taken action to improve the quality of teaching and because new curriculum arrangements are having a positive impact. For example, in a Year 3 lesson linking descriptive writing to a stimulus from the Disney Fantasia film, one pupil wrote, 'The deadly, devastating fire eagle darted out of the crater, cruelly flying after the sprite.'
- The school promotes equal opportunities well. It uses the pupil premium funding to provide a range of support including one-to-one teaching, extra help with English and mathematics and additional support in lessons. Gaps in progress between those eligible for support through the funding and other pupils are closing as a result.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make adequate and sometimes good progress, particularly when provision and support accurately meet their needs. Pupils who join or leave the school part way through their education make adequate progress overall. A few pupils who are educated off site for part of their time join in well when they are in school. Their progress is being monitored carefully and they are beginning to make good gains, particularly in their social skills.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has not been good enough over time to ensure that pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, recent improvements in teaching, seen during the inspection, are now beginning to lead to better progress.
- A new system for setting targets for pupils means that teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and, as a result of effective training, they are more accurate in their assessment of pupils' work. In most lessons the level of work is at the right level for the majority of pupils, but teachers do not always offer work that is demanding enough for the most able pupils. Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to learn independently and are sometimes not clear about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teachers do not consistently check pupils' progress in lessons and do not always make clear what the pupils will be learning. Where teaching is best, teachers give clear checklists for learning, which help pupils to do tasks by themselves, evaluate their own work and see what they need to do to improve their work.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is good because staff have been successful in providing an interesting and happy environment that is used well to promote communication and social skills. In a recent school survey of parents, the majority felt that their child had settled well and was making good progress.
- In mathematics, teachers are planning more varied and creative activities that are helping pupils to make better progress. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils worked with a range of apparatus, including beads, cubes and counters, to calculate halves and doubles of numbers. As a result, all of the pupils were fully involved in the work and made good progress.
- Teachers often ask effective questions to help pupils learn more. In Reception, for example, children were shown a toy cat, and were looking at sentences about it. One child noticed that the sentence included the words 'red hat' and so the teacher produced a red hat to place on the toy and then held a discussion about how words could describe things.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and value their opinions. Consequently, pupils enjoy coming to school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and friendly and show high levels of respect for adults. They get on notably well with each other in pairs and in small groups.
- Pupils have positive attitudes but do not always take an active part in their own learning. They enjoy lessons and show a pride in their work. They are able to concentrate well and try hard. They very rarely disrupt lessons.
- Class discussions, assemblies and the focus on personal and social education help pupils to develop good social skills and an understanding of how to become good citizens. Pupils understand what the different types of bullying are and are confident that adults will always tackle discrimination.
- Case studies show that strong and effective support has helped pupils who may otherwise find school difficult. Such intervention has been particularly effective in their making good progress in developing social skills.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are carefully logged in school records, but senior leaders and managers do not analyse these well enough to find out how much difference their actions to improve behaviour have made.
- Attendance is above average because there are good systems for encouraging pupils to come to school.
- The school's provision for safeguarding, including child protection procedures, is strong. Consequently, pupils feel safe in school and recognise risks.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers do not consistently check the impact of their actions on pupils' progress. However, the quality of action planning has improved and leaders have a clear awareness of the school's current priorities and how these can be tackled.
- Despite a difficult period over recent months, including staff illness, the headteacher, supported by senior leaders and managers, is now beginning to take effective action to improve the quality of teaching. As one teacher said, 'I feel more confident now to teach to my own strengths and try something new.' Procedures for managing teachers' performance, including links to pay, are secure.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school, particularly by providing a consultant headteacher and an adviser to support improvements in teaching. It has also

supported governors well with regular reviews and recommendations for further improvements.

- The partnership with a local academy is starting to have a positive impact in raising standards and improving teaching. Teachers have worked together across both schools to develop best practice in marking pupils' work and teachers from Temple Mill have observed good practice that they can use in their own lessons. The school has also worked well with external agencies to support individual pupils.
 - The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils and provides good opportunities for pupils to develop social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness. For example, Year 4 pupils develop good understanding of racism through their study of Black History Month. There is not enough focus on meeting the needs of the most able pupils, however. Leaders are aware of the need for more opportunities for pupils to develop skills in information and communication technology.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement because, as a relatively new team, the governors do not yet have accurate information about school performance which limits their ability to hold senior leaders to account. They do not use their visits to the school effectively enough so that they can evaluate how well the school is improving. However, they have a good understanding about the quality of teaching overall and have taken effective steps to tackle underperformance. They know how the school is using the pupil premium and other funding, but they do not yet have an accurate evaluation of the impact of this support. Governors have strengthened performance management procedures and ensure that rewards for staff are directly linked to how well pupils are doing. They ensure that statutory duties are met and have good procedures for vetting staff and providing effective training to keep pupils safe.
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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	132267
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	406491

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Peachell
Headteacher	Jane Bright
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 November 2010
Telephone number	01634 727668
Fax number	01634 290917
Email address	office@templemill.medway.sch.uk

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