

St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School

Canon Close, Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 3EN

Inspection dates

20–21 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

- In Key Stage 2 there is not enough good or better teaching to enable all pupils to make good progress.
- In Years 5 and 6, teachers do not always match work closely to pupils' previous skills. As a result, work is sometimes too hard or too easy for them, especially in mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, some lower attaining pupils read hesitantly because they do not have a good grasp of phonics (knowledge of letters and their sounds). Also, weaker spelling and handwriting mar the quality of some pupils' writing.
- In Years 3 and 4, teachers do not consistently help pupils to use their phonics skills when reading and writing.
- At the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils do not do as well in mathematics as they do in reading.
- Checks on teachers have not resulted in good teaching throughout the school. Middle leaders do not consistently check how well different groups of pupils are learning when observing colleagues' teaching.
- Not enough governors have had training in how to check pupils' progress and this prevents them from asking leaders searching questions about the progress of pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils achieve well in Reception and Key Stage 1 because of good teaching. Their attainment is above average on entry to Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are well-behaved. They are respectful and courteous. They feel safe and secure.
- Attendance is high and there have been no exclusions.
- The school is improving and senior leaders, supported by governors, are taking effective steps to improve the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher, and they heard a sample of pupils read from Years 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- Inspectors discussed different aspects of their work with pupils and looked at the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress, as well as a range of their work.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, members of staff holding senior and middle leadership responsibilities, and a representative from the local authority.
- In planning the inspection, inspectors took account of the 38 responses to the online Parent View survey and discussions with parents and carers as well as their letters to inspectors.
- They took account of the 12 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, teachers' plans, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, governing body minutes and records of the school leaders' monitoring of lessons.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick

Additional inspector

Bill James

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school in a residential area on the outskirts of Rochester.
- The proportions of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds and those speaking English as an additional language are both above the national average.
- A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs at school action is below average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. These pupils' needs mainly relate to speech, language, literacy and numeracy difficulties, and also to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher, who has been at the school for two years, had an extended period of absence for most of the last academic year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good by:
 - strengthening the teaching of reading in Years 3 and 4 and enabling pupils to consistently apply their phonics skills when reading and writing
 - ensuring teachers in Years 5 and 6 use assessment more effectively to match pupils' work in mathematics to their needs, especially lower and higher attainers
 - ensuring teachers direct more questions to middle and lower attaining pupils in mathematics lessons so they are enabled to take an active part in whole-class activities.
- Raise achievement and quicken pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring pupils in Key Stage 2 improve their spelling and punctuation
 - ensuring all pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to join their handwriting
 - improving the phonic skills of lower attaining pupils.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - developing subject leaders' ability to evaluate how well different groups are learning when observing lessons
 - increasing governors' understanding of pupils' assessments so that they can challenge the school more effectively regarding the achievement of different groups.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress in Key Stage 2. After a dip in 2012, pupils' achievement is getting better.
- Children enter Reception with knowledge and skills which are typical for their age. Their progress is good and has improved in recent years. On entry to Year 1, their attainment is now above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average. However, higher attaining pupils do not do quite as well in mathematics as they do in reading and fewer attain the higher levels despite the good progress made.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is rising and is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Currently, nearly all pupils are reaching at least the levels expected for their age in reading and mathematics and over a half are reaching higher levels in these subjects. Boys attain as well as girls, which was a relative weakness in the past. However, weaker spelling and punctuation mar the quality of writing for some middle and lower attaining pupils and this prevents standards in writing rising more quickly.
- In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good progress in mathematics but their progress in literacy is slower. They do not consistently learn to apply phonics to spell words or to join their handwriting. Lower attaining pupils often have gaps in their phonics skills which cause them to read hesitantly.
- In mathematics, pupils' progress occasionally slows in Years 5 and 6 when the work provided is too hard for lower attainers or too easy for higher attainers.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make progress similar to their peers. Small-group teaching speeds up the progress of both of these groups but their progress is uneven across Key Stage 2.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding achieve well by the time they leave the school because of the good impact of extra help for raising their attainment in Years 5 and 6. By Year 6, the school has successfully closed the gap between the standards achieved for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and other groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not promote good achievement in Key Stage 2. Pupils are not consistently building well enough on their above average attainment on entry to Year 3.
- There is a trend of sustained improvement in teaching in Reception and Key Stage 1. Although there is also some good teaching in Key Stage 2 this is not consistent in either literacy or numeracy.
- In Reception, there is a good balance between focused adult teaching and purposeful play. The direct teaching of literacy, including phonics, is good. Stimulating play activities and good adult support enable children to apply their phonics skills well, for example when they read simple words hidden in the sand.
- In Key Stage 1, the teaching of literacy skills is strong. Teachers carefully build children's phonics skills in dedicated sessions and systematically enable pupils to apply their skills to an interesting range of literacy tasks, for example, when Year 2 pupils learned to use adjectives to improve their sentence writing.
- In Key Stage 2, literacy lessons are usually relevant to pupils' interests and linked with learning opportunities stemming from other curriculum areas. A systematic programme for teaching

phonics has recently begun in Years 3 and 4. However, teachers in these years do not always spend enough time directly teaching reading or encouraging pupils to apply their phonics skills when reading and writing.

- Professional training in mathematics has improved teachers' knowledge of how to teach mental calculation and problem solving. However, during whole-class teaching in Years 5 and 6, the work they provide is sometimes too hard for lower attaining pupils or too easy for the higher attainers.
- On occasions, when teachers question pupils in a whole-class setting, they do not direct enough questions to middle and lower attaining pupils. This prevents these pupils explaining their thinking and taking a more active part in mathematics lessons.
- Pupils have clear targets and teachers are consistent in their approach to marking. They give pupils a clear evaluation of their work and identify steps for improvement, so pupils know what to do make their work better.
- Teaching assistants usually give good support to disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Occasionally they do too much for the pupils which hinders the development of their independence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- School leaders successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is an atmosphere of kindness and respect for one another. The broad curriculum arouses pupils' interest in school and sense of wonder in the world around them.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They greet visitors politely and talk proudly about their school. Pupils are courteous to one another during playtimes and in classrooms. They are well aware of the rules about behaviour; they work hard and respond well to teachers' consistently high expectations in these areas.
- Pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are helped well to adjust to school. This means that lessons proceed with little interruption.
- Pupils feel safe and secure at school. They learn about forms of bullying and what to do to stay safe, including how to stay safe on the internet. They say there is very little bullying and any incidents that occur are dealt with quickly and effectively. The overwhelming majority of parents, carers and staff agree with this view.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning but a few lose interest in lessons when they put their hands up and are not chosen to answer questions. Occasionally, pupils' attention wanders when lesson introductions are not challenging or are too hard.
- Pupils cooperate and work well as a team when working in small groups. They read regularly at school and at home and take good care of their books and the school's resources.
- Attendance is high and pupils are punctual.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work closely together to improve the school. Senior leaders have established the right priorities and put suitable actions in place which are improving teaching and achievement but these have not yet resulted in consistently good teaching and levels of achievement throughout the school.
- Assessment systems have been strengthened since the previous inspection. Teachers as well as school leaders regularly evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils' progress. Leaders have set challenging targets for teachers in order to hold them to account. Performance management of staff is closely linked to pupils' progress and teachers' professional development needs.
- Subject leaders set a good example by the quality of teaching. They have begun to monitor the

quality of teaching across the school. However, they are having less impact in Key Stage 2 than in Reception and Key Stage 1. Their lesson monitoring does not consistently show the impact of teaching on the progress of different groups.

- The curriculum is broad and meets pupils' needs. The environment for learning in Reception has improved well since the previous inspection and a stimulating range of activities, both in the classroom and in the outdoor area, enables children to learn through purposeful play.
- The school is making effective use of its allocation of funds to support pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Additional teaching groups for these pupils in Years 5 and 6 accelerates their progress and enables them to catch up with other pupils by the end of Year 6.
- Although the school is taking steps to ensure all pupils receive an equally good standard of education, inconsistencies remain. Nevertheless, all groups of pupils have equal opportunity to achieve and there is no significant underachievement.
- Support from the local authority has recently increased and is proving effective in challenging the school to promote pupils' better achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Child protection arrangements are robust and arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated in the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well organised and hold the headteacher to account for the performance of the school. The Chair of the Governing Body and vice-chair carefully monitor pupils' performance but other governors have not had enough training in how to do this and this prevents them from being as effective as they might be. Governors know about the quality of teaching and how performance management is being used to improve it, for example for teaching phonics in Years 3 and 4. They are now ensuring that pay progression for teachers and leaders is carefully matched to the progress of pupils. Governors carefully monitor the impact of the school's use of pupil premium funding on the impact of pupils' attainment by Year 6 but their monitoring of how this funding is used in supporting younger pupils is less robust.

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	118775
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	401786

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Twist
Headteacher	Anne Keywood
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2010
Telephone number	01634 404267
Fax number	01634 404788
Email address	office@stwilliamperth.medway.sch.uk

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