

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Mount Pleasant, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7BE

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

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		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching requires improvement to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- In all year groups, work is often pitched at one level so more-able pupils find it too easy and less able pupils find it too hard.
- Given their starting points at the end of Key Stage 1, not enough pupils are making sufficient progress to reach the expected and higher levels of attainment in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are not always clear about what they are learning in lessons. Marking and feedback do not consistently inform pupils about how they can improve their work.
- Pupils do not always have clear reasons for writing.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to work independently and take the initiative and responsibility for their own learning, particularly in developing their mathematical skills by carrying out investigations and problem-solving activities.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have ensured teaching and achievement have improved from the previous inspection. However, leaders at all levels need to be more involved in leading and checking on developments in school.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are polite and friendly. They have good attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in their above-average attendance.
- Most pupils behave well. They feel safe in school and treat each other with respect and care.
- Children get a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and show above-average attainment by the end of Year 2.
- Achievement in reading is better than it is in writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or part lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector talked to pupils about their work and listened to some pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff with responsibilities, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, representatives of the local authority and a national leader of education who is working with the school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress, monitoring information and records relating to attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 79 responses to the online Parent View survey and eight questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Peter's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional government funding (the pupil premium) is below average but increasing year on year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Reception class.
- There is a Nursery school on the site that is managed by a private provider and is therefore not included in this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by:
 - ensuring that work is at exactly the right level for different groups of pupils, so it is not too easy for more-able pupils or too hard for those who struggle
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work by themselves and take more of the initiative for their learning
 - making sure that pupils are clear about what they are learning in lessons
 - giving pupils more guidance on how to improve their work.
- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - accelerating the progress pupils make by building more rapidly on their achievement at the end of Year 2
 - ensure writing activities are meaningful and relevant and have a real audience and purpose
 - provide pupils with more opportunities for problem solving and investigative work in mathematics.
- Develop the role of leaders and managers, including governors, by making sure that:
 - leaders other than the headteacher are given more responsibility for checking the school's work, so they play a full role in school development.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2012, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level of attainment by the end of Year 6 was around average in mathematics but below average in writing. The proportion reaching the higher Level 5 was below average in mathematics and no pupils achieved Level 5 in writing. Pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects in Years 3 to 6.
- Some previous staffing disruption contributed to pupils not making the progress they should. Greater staffing stability has led to an improving picture of progress, particularly in Year 6, where the headteacher has taken on the teaching responsibility. However, despite some pupils now making accelerated and good progress, there is still a lot of 'catching up' to do in Key Stage 2 for pupils to achieve the standards they are capable of.
- In the past, limitations in pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation have held them back in writing; this has improved. Pupils often lack motivation for writing tasks because they are not always clear about the purpose of the writing or who is going to read their work. Mathematics lessons include target activities that focus on improving basic mathematical skills.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected and the higher levels was above the national average, and progress is more rapid than in other subjects. The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is effective and younger pupils use these skills with confidence to sound out unfamiliar words. In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2012, taken by the current Year 2 pupils, the proportion achieving the expected level was above that found nationally. Older pupils read fluently and with enjoyment. Pupils learn to use higher-level skills such as skimming and scanning as well as inference and deduction to read between the lines to deepen their understanding of characters.
- Children join the school in the Reception class with skills that are at the expected levels for their age. They achieve well and make good progress to reach and often exceed the expectations for their learning by the time they start in Year 1.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress from their starting points as others, and they, too, make better progress in reading than they do in writing or mathematics. They are mostly supported well by teaching assistants in class lessons.
- School data and pupils' work show that gaps are now closing between the progress made by pupils eligible for the pupil premium and others in the school and pupils nationally. The average points score for pupils supported by the pupil premium is 27.6, while for others in the school it is 28.1. The school has taken steps to make sure they are supported in their academic and social skills and that they all have equal opportunity to benefit from additional support and activities. However, as with other groups, progress is better in reading than in writing or mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is too much teaching that requires improvement and not enough that is good.
- Teachers do not always plan activities for the full range of abilities in each class. As a result, work is not always sufficiently demanding for more-able pupils or, by contrast, is sometimes too difficult for less able pupils to complete.
- At the beginning of every lesson, teachers share the 'OLI', our learning intention, but sometimes this describes the activity they will be doing rather than the expectations for learning and so pupils are not clear about the purpose of their work.
- Sometimes teachers plan carefully so that pupils are very clear about what they are learning and why, and work is at the right level for all abilities. For example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson on multiplication and division, pupils were engaged immediately with an activity that was lively and progressed at a good pace. The teacher then gave sums for pupils to work out and opportunities for them to explain the strategies they used, followed by additional work with differing challenges to suit all abilities. Pupils and the teacher worked enthusiastically, pupils'

understanding was thoroughly checked at each stage and pupils learnt well.

- Pupils' work is marked regularly but marking and feedback to pupils do not always relate to the intended learning and do not consistently provide pupils with what they need to do for the next steps to improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers often give pupils opportunities to talk together to share ideas and opinions. Sometimes, however, teachers expect pupil to talk together and collaborate but the task gives pupils no real purpose for doing so and so pupils are not clear about what they are learning. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils were individually completing their own bar charts rather than sharing one between two, and this limited the need to talk and make decisions together.
- Teaching does not always give pupils opportunities to develop their independence as learners, by taking the initiative and more responsibility for their learning, for example, in devising their own meaningful and purposeful investigations and problem-solving activities in mathematics.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective, with an appropriate balance of teacher-directed activities and those where children can choose for themselves.
- Teaching assistants generally provide good support that is well tailored to meet the individual needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in particular.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good in lessons, at playtimes and lunchtimes. Records show that this is typical of behaviour over time. Pupils behave well on their way into and during assembly. Most pupils are very calm and enter quietly, sitting patiently until the assembly starts. They responded well and listened attentively to the vicar from the local church who was taking the assembly. However, behaviour is good rather than outstanding because some pupils sat and chatted to others around them and some left the hall in an enthusiastic but slightly over boisterous manner.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They work hard and stick at their tasks even if they find them difficult. On a small number of occasions, pupils' attention wanders when work is too hard or too easy.
- Pupils are articulate, friendly and polite and get on well together. The school promotes good relations and ensures discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils spoken to during the inspection say they like coming to school and feel safe. They say they are not aware of any bullying but understand that there are different types of bullying such as cyber-bullying, name-calling and physical bullying.
- In the online questionnaire, most parents agree that their children are happy and well behaved in school and almost all agree that their children feel safe in school.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher and governors have taken steps to ensure that inadequate teaching has been eradicated and have focused on ensuring that pupils' progress is accelerated in Year 6.
- Subject leaders are relatively new to their posts and provide some helpful guidance to colleagues, but have not had time to make more than an adequate impact on whole-school performance. The headteacher is starting to share leadership responsibilities more widely, for example, one teacher is being trained to take on the role of the special educational needs coordinator.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully improved reading and progress is accelerating, particularly in Year 6, which shows there is capacity to improve further, although increased capacity is required to progress at a more rapid pace.
- The business manager, who, with the headteacher, forms the school's senior leadership team, manages pupils' assessment and progress data very efficiently and regular meetings are held with class teachers to discuss pupils' progress.
- All teachers know they are accountable for pupils' progress as part of the process for setting

targets for their professional development and that salary progression is linked to how well pupils in their class achieve.

- The subjects taught give appropriate emphasis to learning basic skills and teachers work hard to plan opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing, mathematical and communication skills across different subjects. Visits and visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning and experiences and help pupils to develop personal skills, self-esteem and confidence. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Close links with the church and the school's ethos of including all pupils ensure that there are equal opportunities for all.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and the systems and procedures are well established and known by all staff, which ensures that pupils learn and play in a safe, secure school.
- The school works productively with an external consultant provided by the local authority and has successfully improved the school's systems and structures and planning for further improvement. The school is also beginning to work with a national leader of education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body and some of its other members have a long association with the school and support the school in maintaining strong links with the local community and the church. They are willing to challenge and question and understand the need to improve pupils' rates of progress. They receive regular updates on pupils' progress and understand how the school compares with other schools. Since the previous inspection, governors have set up new working parties to enable them to have a better understanding of the school and the governing body now reflects a good range of diverse skills and strengths. Governors are involved in and receive external support for the performance management of the headteacher. They receive overall reports on the quality of teaching and decisions on salary progression for staff based on the results of the headteacher's management of teachers' performance. Governors agree how the pupil premium funding will be spent, for example, on creating seven smaller, single-year group classes and funding extra activities such as swimming and trips so that no pupil is excluded from participating, although they do not check regularly enough to make sure this is making a difference. Governors undertake regular training to support their roles and responsibilities.

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	118617
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	405795

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Sharpe
Headteacher	Simon Temple
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 November 2010
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Fax number	01622 717235
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