

Chilham, St Mary's Church of England Primary School

School Hill, Chilham, Canterbury Kent, CT4 8DE

Inspection dates 24–25 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make a good start to the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve well and from their starting points pupils make particularly good progress in mathematics where standards are high.
- Pupils entering the school have a wide range of ability and because every pupil is seen as an individual they achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and therefore the pace of pupils' learning is strong.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are keen to learn and work enthusiastically together. They confidently share their ideas about their work.
- Attendance has improved because of the effective support the school provides for families.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher, aided by his senior team, has improved the achievement of all pupils since the last inspection.
- The governing body has a comprehensive view of the school and is fully committed to raising standards. Governors have a strong focus in supporting teachers to further improve their teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to be responsible for their own learning by checking their progress to show how secure their understanding is.
- Teachers do not always ensure pupils are engaged in activities closely matched to their ability.
- While the teaching of how to link sounds and letters (phonics) is good across the school, checks to ensure gaps in pupils' learning are being addressed need to be more thorough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition the inspector made a number of short visits to other lessons, listened to pupils read and scrutinised their work.
- The inspector met with pupils and talked about their work. Meetings were also held with the Chair of the Governing Body and another member, senior leaders and a representative of the local authority.
- Documentation covering safeguarding, the performance management of staff, the tracking and assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, records on behaviour and safety, attendance data and the school's checking of teaching and learning were looked at.
- The inspector also visited the school's website and observed pupils as they moved around the school.
- The inspector also took account of the views expressed in the 32 responses from parents and carers in the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own survey of parental views.

Inspection team

Howard Jones, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The majority of the pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is below average while the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from pupil premium funding, including those eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and from service families, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's floor targets which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and further improve achievement by:
 - ensuring pupils are involved in work appropriate to their ability at all times
 - involving pupils in checking their progress so that they become more responsible for their learning and can demonstrate their understanding
 - rigorously checking the teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) across the school to ensure gaps in pupils' learning are addressed quickly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- By the time pupils leave Year 6 their achievement is good. Pupils make the progress they should and some make even better progress in English. Standards are especially high in mathematics and attainment in 2012 was markedly above average.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class. As a result an increasing proportion of children leaving the Reception Year are achieving levels above those expected for their age and are well prepared for their next stage in learning. This is because they are encouraged to make choices about their learning and develop in confidence to talk about their ideas.
- Pupils leaving and joining the school have an effect on published test results. Those who remain in the school throughout their primary education do well, for example pupils on roll throughout Years 5 and 6 are successful at the higher levels in English and mathematics. Pupils new to the school settle in quickly because they receive excellent support and achieve well over time.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They are happy to talk at length about the characters in the stories they read and demonstrate a strong comprehension of the various themes. Pupils link letters to sounds to help them read but some pupils have gaps in their ability to apply these skills consistently and this restricts the variety of text they read.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because the school's provision is strong across the whole school. For every aspect of their learning the support they receive ensures they successfully engage with their learning. Some of these pupils achieve especially well in mathematics.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make good progress. They are checked closely and the impact of the range of activities used shows these pupils often make faster progress than those in other groups in reading, writing and mathematics in both Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were overwhelmingly positive about the achievement of their children at the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are skilled in creating rich learning environments. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and remain fully engaged in lessons. Pupils work collaboratively and confidently share their ideas and talk about their learning. Pupils' achievement and quality of work reflects how well they have been enabled to move forward in their learning.
- Teachers have high expectations to which pupils respond positively. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson pupils were challenged to develop strategies for building suspense and tension in their writing. The pace of learning was sustained at a high level as pupils applied their skills and understanding to talk about the features of a text.
- Teaching is not always successful in making the most of pupils' learning experiences. Sometimes there are missed opportunities to help pupils become more responsible for their own learning by involving them in checking their progress so that they can demonstrate how deep their understanding is.
- Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across subjects. For example, in a science lesson pupils in Years 3 and 4 used key subject vocabulary to write a diary. Pupils' engagement was strong and they talked confidently about their learning.
- Teachers effectively plan activities for pupils to apply their understanding. In a Years 1 and 2 numeracy lesson, both the class teacher and another adult used group work and appropriate strategies to promote learning and sustain challenge throughout. Consequently all pupils made at least good progress.
- In the Reception Year adults effectively use questioning to develop children's language.

Children are challenged to extend their ideas and apply their skills creatively. For example, groups of children had decided to use a variety of resources including ice to extend their understanding of the world around them. This led to some exciting learning and developed talking opportunities.

- Additional adults in classes make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They are skilled across a range of subjects to provide appropriate levels of support to ensure pupils work confidently and independently and make good progress.
- Teachers mark pupils' work and provide clear developmental guidance. However, achievement is sometimes restricted because teachers do not always use their checks of pupils' progress to plan activities that are closely matched to their ability.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptionally good. Pupils are attentive and enthusiastic across a range of subjects. They share their ideas and support each other during group work. They enjoy talking about what they have written or created. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils in an art lesson were eager to talk about how they had applied techniques used by Picasso to inspire their own artwork.
- The school promotes constructive relationships exceptionally well and creates a strong sense of belonging across the school. Pupils from all backgrounds get on very well together. They say they especially value having friends across the different year groups.
- Pupils talk confidently of how to keep safe and avoid risk. The school has ensured pupils are well informed on how to use the internet safely. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree the school keeps their children safe.
- Bullying and cyber bullying are rare. Pupils say bullying does not happen and are rightly proud of their own suggestion of an anti-bullying charter to which all pupils and teachers have signed. Pupils are accepting of each other's differences and many have taken on responsibilities across the school to serve and help each other.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. This is because of the school's effective work with families.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides a focused drive to ensure all pupils achieve well. His high expectations that every pupil is supported so they become increasingly confident and successful in their learning is shared by all teachers and staff. He is ably supported by the assistant headteacher in promoting this ambition.
- Leaders at all levels have successfully taken on extra responsibilities. They value the training opportunities the school has provided to further enhance their classroom practice and are eager to develop approaches to support pupils' learning. Consequently, they provide effective support in moving the school forward.
- The school's own checks on their actions are accurate with a clear plan for improvement. This is closely linked to performance management and all staff are seen to be responsible for ensuring improvements in pupils' achievement.
- The subjects taught across the school are planned to be engaging for pupils. There are rich opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across other subjects, for example numeracy during information and communication technology lessons. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development serves to inform pupils' excellent behaviour.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals do as well as other pupils as measured in average score points at the end of Year 6. Provision for their support is planned effectively and reviewed regularly to make sure it is helping them to succeed. Many take on responsibilities across the

school.

- Partnerships with parents and carers are good. They value the links they have with the school and appreciate how differences in culture are promoted positively.
- The school has strong potential for continued success. Because of this, the local authority has become less involved other than responding to specific requests to provide support.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body has a wealth of experience that it effectively uses to support the school. It knows how well the pupils are performing when compared to performance nationally. It understands the strengths and areas which need development to further improve pupils' achievement. Governors are involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and setting targets for both the headteacher and teachers. This informs decisions about pay thresholds. The governors are also developing their understanding through training to increase their ability to hold the school to account. They have an in-depth knowledge of how the pupil premium is being used and how it is monitored by the school to improve achievement. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties to ensure pupils are kept safe.

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	118665
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	405803

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

Type of school	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Reeves
Headteacher	Richard Williams
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2010
Telephone number	01227 730442
Fax number	01227 732398
Email address	headteacher@st-marys-canterbury.kent.sch.uk

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