

Capel Primary School

Five Oaks Green Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 6RP

Inspection dates 7–8 February 2013

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

- Progress in writing in Years 1 and 2 is not as rapid as in mathematics and reading. Not all older pupils have well-formed, legible handwriting or sufficient opportunities to write in different subjects.
- Despite children making much-improved progress in Reception, there is still some variability in the quality of teaching.
- The school is not promoting consistently good behaviour and expectations are not high enough. There is a high noise level in a few classes and in the lunch hall. This is not being adequately addressed by leaders.
- The improvements have been partly dependent on external support and the school lacks capacity within the current leadership structure to ensure that improvements can be sustained.
- The governing body does not provide sufficient challenge in relation to pupils' progress and is not sufficiently aware of the impact of additional government funding.

The school has the following strengths

- Reading is taught well. Pupils make strong progress across the school and build their confidence in tackling unfamiliar texts.
- Pupils now achieve well over time. Their attainment in English and mathematics has risen steadily by the end of Year 6 and was above average in 2012.
- The quality of teaching is good. Weaker teaching has been largely eliminated. Teachers measure pupils' progress very thoroughly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make consistently good progress as a result of well-planned support.
- The progress of pupils in receipt of free school meals and of those who are supported by extra government funding is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. Their attendance is above average.
- With the support of the local authority, leaders have made improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which four were seen together with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school's middle and senior leaders, and two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including records of checks on the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and the tracking of pupils' progress. They also looked closely at pupils' written work and listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Christine Taylor

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Capel Primary is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also slightly above average.
- No pupils are currently educated through alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school offers a breakfast club which is managed by the governors and formed part of this inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has gained a number of awards recently, including Healthy School status and the Eco-Schools award.
- The headteacher was absent from school owing to illness during the period of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing, ensuring in particular that:
 - pupils make more rapid progress in developing their writing skills in Years 1 and 2
 - more attention is given to ensuring that pupils' handwriting is well formed and legible
 - more frequent opportunities are planned for pupils to develop their writing in subjects across the curriculum.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - increasing the capacity of the leadership team at all levels and lines of accountability
 - ensuring that there is consistency of approach to the management of pupils' behaviour and more rigorous analysis of the impact of measures taken
 - ensuring that all aspects of teaching in the Early Years Foundation stage are of good quality.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly average, although pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 is more rapid in mathematics than in writing. However, lesson observations and pupils' work indicate that current initiatives to boost progress in writing are promoting more consistent progress.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen significantly over the last three years and was above average in 2012. The progress of current Year 6 pupils had been relatively slow in Year 5. Rigorous teaching in Year 6 is driving accelerated progress for these pupils, so that they are making up lost ground. Staffing changes have ensured that progress is now consistently good in Years 3 to 6. Not all pupils, however, have well-formed, legible handwriting.
- Children enter Reception with skill levels close to those expected nationally for their age. They make increasingly good progress as a result of generally good teaching and demanding activities, and are now leaving Reception at levels above those expected.
- Reception children benefit from an appropriate grounding in the linking of sounds and letters (phonics). Older pupils also make good progress in reading. Any gaps in their phonic knowledge are quickly identified and addressed through effective teaching. In consequence, attainment continues to rise.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is consistently good. This is because of well-organised and effective support, good identification of pupils' needs and effective training for teaching assistants. Teaching staff are now held accountable for the progress pupils make.
- Last year, the progress and attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals exceeded those of similar pupils nationally in both Year 2 and Year 6, as measured by average points scores. The school is successfully enabling these pupils to narrow the gap in their learning. Pupil premium funding also subsidised school clubs, attendance at breakfast club and counselling support for identified pupils. These strategies have contributed to improvements in pupils' attitudes to school and their basic skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school has rigorously identified and tackled those pockets of weaker teaching which had, in the past, a negative impact on pupils' progress. Coaching and support have been used, with some success, to tackle underperformance. The increased proportion of good teaching has underpinned improved progress and higher attainment.
- In the best lessons, the pace is brisk and pupils are fully engaged in learning. This was seen, for example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 6, where the teacher motivated pupils well, activities were planned so that the challenge was right for each group, and pupils were expected to produce high-quality work. There was significant challenge for the most able, with work pitched at the highest Level 6. In a few lessons, however, teachers do not manage behaviour effectively and noise levels sometimes escalate to the point where they are distracting for many pupils.
- In the Reception class, the children are provided with a warm and welcoming environment in which to learn. Staff promote their early communication and mathematical skills well but sometimes miss opportunities to challenge children in a variety of situations.
- The sharing of good practice across the staff, supported by collaborative work with other schools, has contributed to the cohesive approach evident across the school. Teachers have clear guidance as to how pupils should present and record their work, and this is mostly evident in pupils' written work.
- Improved training for additional adults in the classroom has resulted in more rapid learning by supported pupils. Most support staff are highly skilled, as a result of well-targeted additional

training, and confidently deputise for class teachers. The school regularly reviews the deployment of these staff to ensure that their skills are used appropriately.

- The way pupils' progress is checked and supported has improved significantly. Teachers make consistently good use of learning targets, marking and success criteria, and involve pupils well in assessing their own work. The information gained is used well to match work closely to pupils' ability levels and learning needs and has contributed well to pupils' improved progress. The marking of pupils' work is conscientious. The school's implementation of 'child-friendly' targets is considered a model of good practice by its local authority.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' day-to-day behaviour is generally good. They are enthusiastic and well-motivated learners. Most parents and carers who gave their views believe that behaviour is good. However, there are inconsistencies in teachers' approach to behaviour management. This leads to significant low-level noise in some lessons which escalates in a small minority of lessons and is distracting pupils from their learning. Noise levels are often excessive in the lunch hall. School leaders have not responded adequately to deal with these concerns.
- In other respects, effective procedures ensure that most incidents are managed well. A new behaviour policy has been implemented this year. Although the impact of this policy has not yet been evaluated, initial indications are that minor incidents have reduced. There have been no exclusions for several years.
- Pupils feel that the adults in school will always respond promptly to any issues. Racist incidents and inappropriate behaviour are rare.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with a wide range of individual needs.
- The breakfast club is well managed, provides good care for pupils before school starts and meets current national requirements.
- Recorded instances of bullying are rare. Pupils recognise that bullying may take different forms, such as internet bullying or name-calling based on gender or physical differences. The school encourages pupils to look out for each other, promoting roles such as mediators or 'buddies'.
- Pupils have an appropriate understanding of risk, supported by the school's focus on personal safety, including road and internet safety. They know how to keep themselves safe in a range of different circumstances.
- Attendance is above average. Most pupils arrive punctually.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the current leadership structure is not providing the school with the capacity to sustain the improvements that have been made since the previous inspection. The leadership team are relatively inexperienced and lines of accountability are unclear in the absence of the headteacher.
- Nevertheless, since the previous inspection there have been significant improvements in teaching and assessment and, in consequence, pupils' achievement is better. School leaders have created a climate in which teachers can thrive. However, some of the issues around the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils' behaviour have not been resolved and improvement has been dependent on local authority support to some extent. Thus the capacity of leaders to build on improvements is currently limited.
- Procedures for checking and improving the performance of teachers are in place and decisions about pay rises are linked to pupils' progress. Leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching are accurate. As a result, good teachers have improved further. Links with other schools are well established, providing good opportunities for staff to improve their skills and knowledge.
- The school development plan defines an appropriate agenda for addressing current weaknesses.

- The school provides an appropriate range of subjects and activities. Sufficient time is given to developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The implementation of a more creative curriculum is a current priority. Work is on-going to implement themes and topics which will engage pupils' interest more fully. Year 6 pupils speak enthusiastically about the recent 'Travel Agency' topic. However, there are some missed opportunities to develop pupils' writing and skills across different subjects. An appropriate range of out-of-school activities and a residential visit in Year 6 extend pupils' experience. However, other opportunities for visits and outings are limited.
 - Pupils' social and moral development is good. Spiritual development is supported adequately through collective worship and church visits. Pupils have occasional planned opportunities to engage with other cultures. Links with parents and carers are mostly good. Parents and carers have some opportunities to learn more about what their children are doing.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement. Governors are very committed to the school and visit frequently. They take up opportunities for training and understand most aspects of their role. However, while they are active within most committees, providing, for example, expertise and challenge in the financial management of the school, they are less incisive, corporately, in their analysis of the school's performance or in defining its areas for development. There is little recorded evidence of challenge in the minutes of governors' meetings and insufficient evidence of direct evaluation of the impact of past decisions. Governors' analysis of data and their knowledge of pupils' performance are dependent on the headteacher, although at least one governor has developed sound skills in analysing the school's data. Governors are, however, aware of the need to ensure that pay and promotion are firmly linked to teachers' effectiveness and are actively involved in staffing issues. They recognise the school's responsibility to ensure equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination. However, key members of the governing body have not had sufficient involvement in decisions about the use of pupil premium funding and lack awareness of the extent to which it is helping to close gaps in pupils' achievement. Governors ensure, along with senior leaders, that safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements. Contingency arrangements to cover the absence of senior staff are not sufficiently robust.
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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	118271
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	405757

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Sawyer
Headteacher	Janet Fletcher
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2011
Telephone number	01892 833919
Fax number	01892 837158
Email address	headteacher@capel-tonbridge.kent.sch.uk

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