

Reculver Church of England Primary School

Sweechbridge Road, Hillborough, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 6TA

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders and managers have been ineffective in raising the achievement of pupils.
- Pupils leave the school with low standards of attainment in writing and mathematics. Poor teaching has led to pupils making too many errors in their writing and they do not know how to use their mathematics skills to solve problems.
- There are weaknesses in the quality of teaching throughout the school and particularly in Years 1, 5 and 6, where lessons are not planned to meet the needs of the different abilities of the pupils.
- Much of the information about pupils' progress is inaccurate. Consequently, the school does not know if pupils are falling behind and cannot take action to help them catch up.
- Checks by leaders on the quality of teaching are not regular enough and targets for improvement for teachers are not followed up.
- The governing body is ineffective because it does not know how well the school is doing and therefore cannot support or challenge the school's leaders appropriately.
- In some lessons, pupils are not well enough behaved when they are working on their own.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in Reception make good progress because they are provided with a range of interesting things to do and adults work with them well.
- Pupils with visual impairments make good progress because well-qualified adults adapt classroom resources appropriately and give good support in lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 24 lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, they made a number of other short visits to lessons and observed an assembly. They also looked at pupils' books and observed other aspects of the school's work.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and a parent governor and school staff. A group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 was interviewed about their learning and well-being and pupils gave the inspectors a tour of the school. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about their reading and listened to them read. A meeting was held with two representatives of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and spoke to parents at the school gate. They also reviewed 26 questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school's own data relating to pupils' achievement in the school year 2011/12 and since September 2012, the school's self-evaluation summary and school development plan, planning and monitoring documentation including external reviews commissioned by the school, records relating to behaviour and attendance, policy documents and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helen Powell

Additional Inspector

Carol Vant

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Reculver Church of England Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- One in six of the pupils is eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for specific groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority), which is lower than average but the proportion is increasing.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are broadly in line with those found nationally.
- The school has specialist provision for four visually impaired pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for three weeks.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in Years 1, 5 and 6, by:
 - using accurate information about what pupils know and understand to plan lessons which meet the needs of all
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects
 - giving better feedback in marking which shows pupils how they can improve their work
 - making learning more fun and exciting so that pupils, particularly boys, are more interested and make faster progress in reading and writing
 - making sure that teaching assistants are always clear about what is expected of them in every lesson.
- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - regularly offering more opportunities for pupils to solve problems and apply their skills in mathematics lessons
 - making sure that pupils are taught how to write neatly and accurately using correct spelling, grammar and punctuation
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write for sustained periods of time and for a greater variety of purposes
 - making sure that pupils in Key Stage 1 make faster progress in reading by helping them to learn their letters and the sounds they make
- Improve behaviour so that in all lessons pupils work well on their own and do not lose concentration and distract others.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - providing training for leaders at all levels so that they are more accurate in judging the quality

of learning and teaching

- checking more often and more rigorously on the quality of teaching so teachers know what they need to do to improve and how quickly
- developing leaders' use of assessment information to set targets for teachers which have a sharp focus on making sure that pupils catch up more quickly
- regularly checking on pupils' progress to identify those who are falling behind and providing support to enable them to catch up
- making sure that all pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding are provided with appropriate support
- improving the systems for planning for the future so plans are clear, have specific outcomes and include interim measures against which progress can be regularly evaluated
- developing the skills and knowledge of the governing body so governors understand better how well the school is doing, can support appropriately and regularly challenge it to improve.

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 inadequate

- Progress is poor throughout Key Stage 2 and pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics is low. In 2012, although progress in reading was similar to that expected nationally, nearly a quarter of pupils did not make expected progress in writing and one in five did not make expected progress in mathematics. Not enough pupils made more than expected progress.
- The gap between the attainment of boys and girls in reading and writing is too high, with boys reaching levels well below those of the girls at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is better in English because they are supported with reading both in lessons and through targeted individual and small group work. However, progress in writing and mathematics is poor.
- Pupils who are visually impaired get good specialist help, enabling them to take a full part in lessons. Classroom resources are adapted well and additional provision meets their needs well, ensuring they make good progress.
- Pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding do not all receive help to quicken their progress. As a result, these pupils do not make enough progress and do not catch up with their peers either in the school or nationally.
- Children enter the school with skills below those typical for their age and make good progress in Reception, entering Year 1 with skills close to what would be expected nationally. By the end of Year 2, pupils are broadly in line with standards nationally in writing and mathematics but well below in reading.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching overall, and particularly in Years 1, 5 and 6, does not enable enough pupils to make sufficient progress. This is due to poor planning to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities, too many routine and uninspiring activities and not enough lessons that excite pupils', especially boys', imaginations.
- Pupils get few opportunities to write at length in ways that interest them. As a result, their handwriting is untidy and they write slowly, their spelling, grammar and punctuation are poor and work is often not completed. When they are presented with a task which interests them, pupils want to write and learn well. An example of this was in a Year 3 lesson where pupils were totally engaged in writing a story inspired by Dr. Who. The next day, the pupils composed music using a computer program to accompany their story.
- Pupils are slow learning to read in Key Stage 1 because the school does not have a consistent approach to teaching letters and the sounds they make. As a result, too few pupils are able to sound out words they know and make sense of unfamiliar ones. Children make better progress in learning to read in Reception because a well-planned programme for reading is in place.
- In mathematics, the oldest pupils spend too much time practising written calculations and do not have enough opportunity to apply their learning by solving problems. In shape and space lessons, opportunities are missed to show pupils examples of how art and design are influenced by mathematics, for example, when teaching reflection and symmetry.
- Extra adults provide good support to pupils, particularly those of lower ability, when they are working with groups or with individuals. However, they are less effective when the teacher is introducing a lesson or talking to the class, as their role is sometimes not clear.
- When teachers mark pupils work, they give little guidance to show them how they can improve it.
- Children in the Reception class have many interesting things to do both inside and outside the classroom and they work very well with adults and each other. Boys were observed developing early writing skills by giving speeding tickets to children going 'too fast' on their tricycles.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**requires improvement**

- Pupils generally listen attentively and try hard when they are working directly with an adult or when the teacher is talking to the whole class. In some lessons, when pupils are working on their own, they lose concentration and this slows down learning. This is often because teachers have not explained clearly enough what the pupils are expected to do.
- Although pupils can occasionally be a little disrespectful to adults and each other, they generally enjoy good relationships with their teachers and with other pupils. In the playground, they play appropriately with each other and the older pupils are proud of helping younger ones in their role as 'buddies'.
- A small proportion of parents felt that bad behaviour and bullying were not managed well. Pupils told inspectors that there is very little bullying or poor behaviour. The school's records reflect this and occurrences are dealt with effectively. Pupils understand about different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. They said they felt safe because they know who to turn to and any incidents are dealt with quickly.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and of each other's differences. They are particularly sensitive to those pupils who are disabled or visually impaired. This shows that the school is effective in fostering good relations and tackling discrimination.
- Pupils are welcoming and keen to talk to inspectors about their work and their school. They enjoy coming to school, their attendance is average and they usually arrive on time.

The leadership and management**are inadequate**

- The school's leaders have failed to respond effectively to the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report and most of the same weaknesses remain more than two years later. Achievement and teaching have not improved and, in some cases, have worsened.
- Systems for tracking pupils' progress are ineffective because the school has no confidence in the accuracy of the data. As a result, the attainment and progress of many pupils are not known by leaders or teachers so effective planning for improvement has been impossible.
- The inaccuracy of the school's own evaluation of its performance has led to a lack of clarity in the plans for making improvements. The plans do not include ways of checking progress towards the intended outcomes. As a result, leaders have not regularly checked to see if what they are doing is having any impact.
- Checking on the quality of teaching is not regular or rigorous enough. As a result, teachers do not have clear targets for improvement nor is it clear when they are expected to have achieved their targets. Teacher appraisal systems are weak and pay progression has not been linked to improved performance. Teachers have been asked to implement new teaching approaches without sufficient training or understanding of how the changes will improve attainment.
- The curriculum meets statutory requirements and suitably promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development but much of it fails to inspire pupils, particularly boys. Pupils were unable to recall many times they were really excited by something they did in school. However, they did value the residential trips to meet pen pals in France and other visits to places of interest.
- The local authority understands the issues in the school and rightly places it in its highest category of concern. Despite the steps taken recently to support the school to identify areas for development in mathematics and to help the governing body appoint a new headteacher, it has not prevented the decline in the school's overall performance.
- The new headteacher has made an excellent start and has the backing of pupils, parents and staff. He has shared his aspirations with senior leaders who are excited about their new roles as they start to work together to form their vision for the school. However, the school must not

appoint any newly qualified teachers.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is ineffective because the information governors have received has not been clear or accurate enough to enable them to check on pupils' progress and thus support and challenge the school appropriately. The governors do not check on the quality of teaching and have an incorrect view of its quality. Governors have had some training in understanding national data about pupils' performance but still do not understand well enough to be able to compare the school with other schools or use it to make plans for the future. Governors do not understand that the pupil premium funding should be used to support all eligible pupils in the school and have not monitored its expenditure closely enough or checked on its impact on learning. They have also not ensured that there is a close match between improvements in teaching and teachers' pay. The governing body ensures the school meets its safeguarding responsibilities, particularly regarding the safety of pupils and the appointment of staff.
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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	118656
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	401776

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	466
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Richardson-Perks
Headteacher	Jon Fox
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 July 2010
Telephone number	01227 375907
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