

# Horton Kirby Church of England Primary School

Horton Road, Horton Kirby, Dartford, DA4 9BN

**Inspection dates** 26–27 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Over time, pupils have not made the progress they should, particularly in English.
- Vacancies within the governing body limit its capacity to examine the school's performance and hold it to account.
- Not all subject leaders use data effectively to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not always set work at the right level of difficulty for pupils.
- In some lessons, time is wasted and activities do not allow pupils to move up to a higher level of learning when they are ready.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to show initiative and find things out for themselves.
- Feedback to pupils, including in marking, does not always identify the next steps for improving subject skills. Not all teachers check to see if pupils are responding to guidance.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders have the confidence of the staff. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are improving the quality of teaching.
- The school is a happy and harmonious community. Pupils behave very well. They feel safe and very well looked after.
- Pupils' attendance is improving and is now average.
- Staff morale is strong and teams are working well together to raise pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

## Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed in 17 lessons and pupils’ work was examined, especially in English and mathematics. Some observations were joint visits with senior leaders. In addition, an assembly for the whole school was observed.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and three members of the school’s governing body. There was also a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. One meeting with pupils was dedicated to a discussion of reading, with an opportunity for pupils to read aloud. Ad hoc discussions with pupils took place at break and lunchtimes.
- Account was taken of the 65 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 21 staff questionnaires. Parents’ and carers’ involvement in school life was discussed with senior leaders. At the beginning of one day, informal conversations were held with parents and carers in the school playground.
- A range of documentation was looked at including records relating to pupils’ progress, behaviour, attendance, and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Jacqueline White, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Alastair McMeckan	Additional inspector
Victoria Turner	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school. Three of the ten classes have mixed-age groups.
- Most pupils are White British. Relatively few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and for almost all English is their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of a parent or carer serving in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair resigned from their posts in December 2012. The school is in the process of recruiting for these vacancies.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To accelerate pupils' progress improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, so that all lessons are good and more are outstanding by ensuring:
  - all teachers use information about what pupils know and can do to provide activities that challenge pupils (especially the more able) appropriately and allow them to move on to more demanding work as they are ready
  - pupils have more opportunities to show initiative and apply what they have learnt through finding things out and solving problems for themselves
  - lessons are conducted at an appropriate pace and time is used well to maximise learning
  - feedback to pupils, including in marking, identifies the next steps for improving subject skills and teachers check that pupils are following the guidance they have given.
- Ensure all subject leaders are able to use data to identify and tackle weaknesses in teaching.
- As a matter of urgency, recruit a Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair and develop governors' expertise in analysing performance data so that they can better hold the school to account.
- 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

### requires improvement

- The majority of children join the Reception classes with the skills and knowledge expected for their age. However, a sizeable group has underdeveloped communication skills. Children settle in quickly and, within the well-organised and stimulating environment, they now make good progress in their early reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 has been broadly average. Pupils' current work shows that attainment is beginning to rise. The good start in Reception is sustained in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is more variable. In particular, as a result of underachievement in the past, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still catching up. This is hindered by some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Standards and progress have been better in mathematics than in English. In recent phonics (the sounds that letters make) checks, results were above the national average. Much-improved systems for checking pupils' progress are ensuring that pupils get extra help if they need it, especially with reading and writing.
- Pupils have good opportunities to read for a variety of purposes in lessons and enjoy books. In discussion with some pupils who had received help with reading, they happily read aloud and used good strategies for working out new words.
- The regular meetings to discuss pupils' progress and target extra help are giving everyone a better chance of success when they start secondary school, including pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and the few who speak English as an additional language.
- The school uses its relatively small amount of pupil premium funding to provide additional teaching support for pupils who need it. Pupils who qualify for the funding make very good and better progress than their classmates in both English and mathematics. In mathematics, their attainment compares very favourably with classmates' and national averages. In English, performance is not so strong. Fewer attain the Level 4 benchmark in national tests compared to classmates and all pupils nationally. However, these gaps are closing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants know these pupils very well and provide sensitive and skilful support which helps them to gain independence.
- In lessons most pupils were seen to be working diligently. They are very supportive of each other and enjoy discussion and being actively involved in learning.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- There are many lessons where teaching is good and sometimes it is outstanding. Nevertheless, overall, there is too much variation in practice, most notably in Key Stage 2.
- Where teaching requires improvement, it is often because teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently and work is too easy for some. Long explanations to the whole class and closely directed activities mean that opportunities are missed for pupils to show their initiative, move on to more challenging work and find things out for themselves. Progress slows, particularly for the most-able pupils, because, although they already understand, they have to continue listening to the teacher or learn at the pace set by the teacher. In some lessons there is too much 'pottering about' and a lack of urgency and energy in making the most of learning time.
- Where teaching is good or better, a range of well-designed resources supports learning that is well paced. The tasks set are imaginative, varied and appropriately demanding. Expectations for work and behaviour are very high and are met. Teachers question expertly to probe and accelerate understanding. Feedback to pupils identifies the next steps in learning and teachers check that pupils are taking their advice on board. There are good opportunities for pupils to investigate and apply what they have learned. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils made good progress and thoroughly enjoyed finding out what happened to different materials

when liquid was spilled on them. They achieved a clear understanding of what waterproof means and its importance in day-to-day life because they were actively involved in well-organised, practical experiments.

- This effective practice is not yet consistent across the school. Pupils are not always clear about the wider purpose of learning and how to improve their work.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire felt their children were taught well. While teaching is not yet good, these views do support the evidence that teaching is improving.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Respect for others is at the heart of the school's values and pupils' good behaviour. Most parents, carers, pupils and all staff agree that pupils behave well. Caring and considerate relationships are evident throughout the school. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other, the staff and visitors to the school and this leads to a calm atmosphere in which pupils are happy.
- The high-quality interactions between members of staff and children in the Reception classes help the youngest children to develop positive personal and social skills.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and they learn how to stay safe in their community and when using the internet. They know and understand the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and are confident that any concerns that they report are managed quickly and effectively by staff.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Their strong sense of belonging is reflected in their improving attendance and their desire to take on responsibilities and help out with the day-to-day running of the school.
- The high expectations of staff that pupils will behave well, equal treatment and effective use of rewards and sanctions help pupils to develop good self-discipline, confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, there are few recorded incidents of misbehaviour. No disruptive behaviour was observed during lessons and school records show that good behaviour is typical in all classes.
- Pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties respond well to the effective support and consistent guidance that they receive. Exclusions are rare.
- The school has a very strong commitment to pupils' personal development through the range of subjects and topics taught. Pupils also enjoy the good range of clubs and trips that enrich their experiences.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and benefit from the regular opportunities to think about their place within the global community and their responsibility to make the world a better place. They show tolerance and an appreciation of people's differences and individuality.

## **The leadership and management** require improvement

- The senior leadership team has demonstrated that it has the capacity to secure further improvements. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and tracking pupils' progress have been considerably improved. Consequently, the proportion of good and outstanding teaching is increasing and pupils are making better progress in all subjects.
- The procedures for performance management have been strengthened to ensure there is a closer link to pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and salary progression.
- Staff are clear that raising achievement is a priority and are united in their determination to bring about improvements. They have responded positively to sharper accountability and to opportunities for training and development. In particular, they have welcomed the chance to develop a partnership and share effective practice with an outstanding school in the locality.
- Data about pupils' progress are now readily available but not all teachers use them well to match

learning to pupils' needs closely. Some subject leaders lack confidence in analysing data to identify and tackle weaknesses in teaching.

- The range of subjects and activities generally meets pupils' needs but, rightly, it is being reviewed to ensure that pupils' creativity and independence are developed fully.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through close involvement with the local church and pupils' participation in community and fund-raising activities. Regular visits and visitors, alongside topics with an international theme, extend pupils' cultural horizons.
- The school has a constructive relationship with the local authority and support is being increased to help accelerate improvement.
- All the parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire would recommend the school to others.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body ensure that pupils are safe and very well cared for. They receive information from the headteacher which enables them to manage staff performance appropriately. A relatively new arrangement which links individual governors to subjects is helping governors to gain first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching. Governors work with the headteacher to ensure that resources are utilised in the best interests of pupils, including pupil premium funding. Those eligible for this funding receive additional support as required and achieve well. The management of the school's finances is sound. Governors' training in relation to safeguarding is up to date and the school meets all safeguarding requirements. The resignation of the Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair means that the governing body is currently lacking leadership. Governors are inexperienced in using data to see how well the school is doing compared to similar schools and schools nationally.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118861
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	403369

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	292
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vacant position
<b>Headteacher</b>	Glenn Pollard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25–26 June 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01322 863278
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