

# St Peter-in-Thanel Church of England Junior School

Grange Road, St Peter's, Broadstairs, CT10 3EP

**Inspection dates** 2–3 May 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

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure good achievement for all the pupils.
- The impact of actions designed to improve achievement in previous years did not make enough difference to pupils in 2012 and, consequently, they made poor progress in English and mathematics.
- Teaching over time has not been good enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress in mathematics.
- In the past, the school did not check on pupil progress frequently enough. Changes in the frequency of checking and the improvements made to methods for assessing pupils' progress have not been in place long enough to judge how effective they are in ensuring that all pupils catch up and achieve well.
- The school has not yet made extensive use of best practice about the most effective teaching from within and beyond the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- Recent staff changes and staff training have eradicated inadequate teaching.
- The leaders of the school, including the governors, know what needs improving and their actions are making an impact on improving teaching and better gathering of information about pupils' progress. They work with partners and the local authority to ensure that improvements are up to date and effective.
- Pupils feel safe and care for each other. They are keen to learn and enthusiastic about their school day, as well as enjoying a wide range of clubs and activities available after school.
- Very positive relationships are evident in the views of parents, who are increasingly keen to join in school events to find out how to help their children to learn out of school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons; one was a joint observation with the headteacher. Inspectors looked at books during lessons to see how well they were marked. Inspectors also carried out short visits to classrooms to check the effectiveness of the school’s aims to develop marking, writing and problem-solving in all subjects. A sample of pupils’ work was checked to see the pupils’ progress in writing and mathematics and to check the accuracy of the information that the school uses to record pupils’ progress.
- Inspectors interviewed a group of pupils, listened to pupils reading and talked with them informally at break and lunch time. Inspectors observed an assembly and made a visit to the breakfast club and some activities in other clubs.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information that included minutes of meetings, school information, the school website, records of checks on the quality of teaching, local authority reports and safeguarding documents.
- Discussions took place with two representatives of the local authority, school governors and members of the leadership team.
- The inspection took note of the 39 responses on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and other contacts from parents, as well as interviewing parents on the playground at the start and end of the school day.

## Inspection team

Christine Fogg, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Watson	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Rudman	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Peter-in-Thanel Church of England Junior School is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through 'school action plus' or a statement of special educational needs is average. The proportion supported at 'school action' is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is extra funding provided to support pupils eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority and those who have a parent in the armed services, is below the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much lower than average.
- A very large majority of pupils are of White British Heritage.
- The school provides a breakfast club and a wide range of extended day activities.
- The school has gained the bronze Eco Schools' Award.
- The school is part of a partnership, the Broadstairs and Ramsgate Ethos School Improvement Company, working together on school improvement, which is supported by the Diocese of Canterbury.

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

- Improve the teaching of mathematics specifically so that all pupils make at least good progress by:
  - ensuring that everyone understands the steps learners need to make when learning new mathematical skills.
- Improve teaching in all subjects, including English, and develop the impact of leadership in order to raise standards by:
  - ensuring that guided reading is effectively taught across different classes
  - using the examples of good marking seen in some books to develop a consistency across all subjects, so that comments in all books are useful to pupils
  - ensuring that assessment information is checked regularly so that pupil under-performance can be quickly identified and interventions put in place.
  - making better use of best practice from both within and beyond the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In 2012, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was well below national expectations and progress was poor for all pupils. This represents a decline in both subjects from standards which had previously been close to or above the national averages. The school leadership did not initially manage to improve pupils' progress despite the interventions that were made. New actions, with good support from the local authority, are now being taken to make improvements and these are making a difference to most pupils. Current school information indicates that standards are likely to improve in 2013, although those in mathematics are still expected to be lower than those in reading and writing.
- The work seen in books and lessons shows an inconsistent picture. Much of the work shows that pupils make the progress that is expected and, in some cases, better. However, a minority of pupils have not made enough progress in writing or mathematics and further interventions are necessary to improve their progress to at least expected levels.
- The attainment range of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average with above-average attainment for some current year groups and the school is aiming high with the targets for 2013. School information shows that in the past, more able pupils did better than their peers and that boys do better in mathematics than girls. The school is now checking all assessment information more carefully and regularly from entry to make sure that any inconsistencies are spotted in time to intervene. Staff have noticed that a number of pupils are still below where they should be by Year 5 and they are making improvements to learning for these pupils.
- In 2012, Year 6 pupils in receipt of the pupil premium attained less well than their peers. In English, the gap represented two terms' progress and in mathematics one year's progress. School information shows that equivalent current Year 6 pupils have made similar progress to their peers in English but slower progress in mathematics. This means that the gap is not narrowing quickly enough in mathematics. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress which is similar to or better than that of their peers in both English and mathematics.
- The progress of most of the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who have English as an additional language is extremely variable. Some are achieving less well than their peers although some have made exceptional progress.
- Pupils read with enjoyment and interest, for example in guided reading sessions, but sometimes their books are not at the right level for them. Where the books are too easy, pupils do not develop the higher reading skills that are expected; when the book is too difficult, the pupils become distracted and give up, sometimes relying on adults to read for them.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because until recently, it was not good enough to ensure all pupils made at least expected progress. Teaching is now improving and much effective teaching was seen during the inspection. However, teaching is not yet consistently good enough over time to ensure that the majority of pupils make good progress by the time they leave the school.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers plan a variety of activities which are generally well matched to the needs of small groups of pupils. Sometimes they plan to use adults to help a group or use information and communication technology to provide appropriate learning. During the inspection, this was seen to work well in some lessons, with all pupils learning new skills and applying them. However, in less successful lessons, sometimes pupils who were given a free choice decided on an easy option or, in other lessons, they relied on the adults doing too much for them and so they did not learn as well as they might have done.
- The teaching of mathematics is not consistently good because teachers do not routinely ensure

that pupils are clear about the next steps needed in order to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts.

- Books are often neat and well presented, showing the high expectations that teachers have. The work is usually marked with helpful comments and suggestions for improvements. Pupils often respond to the teachers' comments by adapting their work or applying the suggestions to their next pieces of work and this helps them to improve. Some English and mathematics books were not marked in this way, meaning that opportunities to reinforce skills for pupils had been missed.
- When teachers have good subject knowledge, they are able to choose interesting resources and plan lessons to extend pupils' experiences. A Year 5 class was entranced by the teacher reading a portion of a poem about a highwayman and some were moved to tears. In another lesson, pupils practised breathing techniques and conducting during their singing lesson. Not all teaching was as successful because some teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to plan the best activities for pupils at each stage in their learning.

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

- Pupils are well motivated and want to do well in lessons. They listen carefully to one another in discussions, as well as offering help and advice to their peers, and they try to do their best. The pupils try hard to do what is expected of them. Occasionally, if the work set for them is not challenging enough, they become distracted and then they are not such active learners.
- Pupils understand how to play safely. They understand the dangers associated with using the internet, they know exactly what to do to keep safe and they can give good advice to others.
- Pupils feel safe in school and, although bullying or incidents of serious misbehaviour are very rare, they know who would help them if bullying happened.
- Pupils care about their school environment and are keen to do more to help it and the environment beyond school. They would like the school council to be more active and meet more often.
- The school offers an open door to parents and reinforces this point on its website; parents value this approach. The vast majority of parents think that their children are safe and that the school looks after them well; parents praise the school for its care and good lines of communication. They say that the behaviour in the school is good and that bullying is dealt with effectively.
- Attendance is above the national average for most pupils and holidays in school time are not authorised. One group of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium have attendance below average and the school is improving this situation by working with families.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because standards have declined since the previous inspection. The school had been aware of the situation and had tried to address underperformance through a series of actions but these did not make a substantial difference soon enough.
- During the past three years, the headteacher was seconded to a local school and successfully led it out of special measures. This experience enabled her to bring new ideas back to the school on her return. However, the school has not yet made extensive use of the best practice about what constitutes effective teaching to raise standards.
- School improvement activities are now more rigorous and inclusive of all staff. The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate and it has correctly identified that not enough of the right actions were taken soon enough to impact on last year's results. The school has developed its self-evaluation processes and responses so that it is confident in its assessment information that

indicates last year's poor results will not be repeated.

- Senior leaders have recently developed the roles of middle leaders so that all levels of leadership are accountable for pupils' progress. The school now formally checks pupils' progress six times a year. Meetings to discuss pupils' progress include class teachers, who contribute to the information that is collected and then plan how to adapt teaching to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to learn well and make good progress.
- Advice from the local authority has been used to make improvements to the information-gathering and recording and teachers have been helped with this by subject leaders. However, it is not always clear exactly how good the progress is for each class.
- The curriculum is planned to allow time for cross-curricular topics that incorporate opportunities to reinforce a range of writing skills, to learn French and for all pupils to learn a variety of musical instruments as they progress through the school. The cross-curricular opportunities for writing are varied and teachers have made some good use of them. However, the marking does not always help pupils to develop their writing skills further and so this part of the curriculum does not always achieve what was intended.
- Parents have high praise for the school and some were keen to explain to inspectors how well the school had cared for their children. The numbers of families involved in events such as reading workshops has increased, with 62 families attending the last event.
- The large choice of after-school activities add a love of sport, the arts and team work to the experiences available for pupils who are keen to be involved. Inspectors heard the ensemble practising before school and the pride and enjoyment of the group were evident.
- Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and up to date. Leaders effectively promote equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff, and are proactive in tackling any form of discrimination.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know the school well and have taken actions to improve the way that they challenge and support it. They have evaluated their own strengths and are proactive in recruiting new governors to add to and complement the skills of the current governing body. They seek training to ensure that their skills are up to date. The governors understand the importance of good or better teaching for all pupils. They ask for information about all pupils' progress because they understand how well the school is doing in comparison to similar schools. They ask challenging questions and support current actions with visits and discussions that reinforce the expectation that there will be improvements. Governors support the school in the development of teaching and understand how performance management can be used to reward this where appropriate; they know with accuracy the current quality of teaching and how it can be improved. The governors know how the pupil premium is being spent and the difference that this is intended to make to pupils entitled to it.

## 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>	118750
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	412925

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	364
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alisdair Chisholm
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Irvine
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4–5 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01843 861430
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