

St Martin's Church of England Controlled Primary School Dorking

Ranmore Road, Dorking, RH4 1HW

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Progress in Key Stage 2 was inadequate in the past and some older pupils are still catching up to where they should be.
- There are differences in achievement between classes and groups. For example, pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals do not achieve as well as others in some classes.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good in all subjects.
- In mathematics, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their skills to solve problems or to apply their mathematical knowledge in different subjects.
- The support provided for those pupils who have fallen behind is not always effective in accelerating their progress.
- The roles and responsibilities of middle leaders are underdeveloped.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders have remedied the serious weaknesses in teaching and pupils' progress is improving, sometimes rapidly.
- The governing body provides increasingly effective challenge and support to school leaders.
- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes make a strong contribution to their learning.
- The school has good strategies to involve parents in their children's education and keeps parents well informed.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons. Most of these were observed jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke to pupils about their work. They met with a group of pupils and also talked to pupils informally at break time.
- An inspector met with five members of the governing body, a group of parents and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also met with senior school staff and middle leaders such as the coordinator of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Inspectors took account of the 87 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team looked at a number of documents, including subject improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, minutes of local authority review meetings and records of pupils' attendance. Inspectors scrutinised the most recent reports on pupils' progress and attainment and records of checks made on the quality of teaching.
- Evidence from Ofsted's previous monitoring visits was also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Melanie Knowles, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Bill James

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Of those pupils who come from other ethnic groups, very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a carer in the armed services) is well below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum levels for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school was deemed to require special measures at its previous section 5 inspection in January 2012. Since that time, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors has carried out three termly monitoring inspections. There have been considerable staff changes in Key Stage 2 in the last year. The deputy headteacher and leader for upper Key Stage 2 both joined the school in the spring term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress through teaching that is consistently good or better in all subjects by ensuring that:
 - all teachers use effective strategies in lessons to ensure that any pupils who have fallen behind overcome difficulties quickly and securely
 - all teaching assistants are able to support pupils' learning effectively
 - teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and apply their mathematical knowledge in other subjects.
- Improve the impact of leaders at all levels by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders so that they make a full contribution to the school's improvement
 - ensuring that support programmes have clear targets and that school leaders check how effective they are in accelerating pupils' progress so any gaps in attainment between groups of pupils narrow quickly
 - reviewing the curriculum to ensure that there is a clear progression of skills in all subjects
 - ensuring that all development plans have measurable short-term and long-term targets and clear timescales.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Until recently, pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 was inadequate. Due to improvements in the quality of teaching, most pupils now make at least the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. However, pupils' achievement requires improvement because progress is not consistently good across all classes and in all subjects. Some older pupils have still not made up the ground lost in previous years.
- Pupils who have fallen behind do not always get enough support to help them make swift progress and catch up. School leaders analyse pupils' progress rigorously and are quick to spot underachievement, but some teachers do not use effective methods in lessons to ensure that these targeted pupils in 'focus groups' overcome difficulties quickly and securely.
- Although disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally make similar progress to other pupils, the extra support programmes designed to accelerate progress are not always effective. Gaps between these and other pupils remain and there is more to be done to ensure that these pupils achieve as well as possible.
- Mathematics has been a focus for improvement across the school. A more systematic approach, ensuring that pupils understand mathematical vocabulary and teachers cover the full range of mathematical skills in lessons, means that most pupils now make the expected progress in this subject. Work in pupils' books shows an emphasis on practising calculation skills. There are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills and work independently to solve real-life problems.
- Work to improve the quality of pupils' writing is on going. Recent initiatives to improve spelling and handwriting are having an impact on pupils' confidence and fluency and some high-quality writing was seen during this inspection.
- Reading is a strength across the school and pupils reach the levels expected by the time they leave. The school makes good use of reading volunteers to ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to read aloud to an adult and recent improvements to the school library give pupils access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books.
- Children join the school in Reception with skills that are generally in line with those expected for their age. Teachers ensure that they provide a wide range of exciting experiences that foster good social development and enable children to acquire the communication and early numeracy skills they will need in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident readers and many have writing and mathematical skills that are above the national average.
- Pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium make less progress than other pupils in some classes. The extra one-to-one and small group teaching provided for pupils has had a variable impact on accelerating progress. For example, checks on pupils' progress over this year show the gap has narrowed in mathematics in most year groups, but not in reading.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good in all subjects or in all classes, but has improved since the previous inspection. Older pupils say that teachers want them to do well and now make them work hard in lessons.
- Some teachers are more confident with teaching reading and writing than mathematics.
- There are occasions when teachers do not plan work that provides the right level of challenge for all groups of pupils. In these lessons, progress is too variable. Some pupils complete the work with ease and others struggle, even with support.
- The school has a large number of teaching assistants and teachers do not always deploy additional adult support well, particularly during whole class teaching sessions. Although some teaching assistants are very skilled, others need further training to enable them to support pupils

effectively.

- All teachers plan interesting lessons with links across subjects that make learning relevant to pupils. For example, as part of their topic on castles, pupils in Year 1 wrote letters to a knight held captive in a dungeon. The pupils settled to work quickly and really enjoyed explaining how they would help him get free.
- Teachers mark pupils' work with care and provide pupils with useful guidance on how they can improve their work. Teachers ensure that pupils have the opportunity to respond to marking and complete corrections.
- Teachers set appropriate homework for pupils and ensure that it is marked regularly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are friendly, caring and cooperative. The school is a harmonious community where pupils get on well with each other in the classroom and on the playground. Pupils understand and appreciate cultural differences.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and want to do well. They listen to each other carefully in discussions and most contribute readily to discussion.
- Staff know individual pupils well and all are valued and well cared for. Pupils say that they feel safe and that bullying of any kind is not a problem in school. They know how to keep themselves safe and understand the risks associated with using the internet. Pupils are confident that any concerns they have will be listened to and dealt with. Behaviour is managed well. Teachers across the school have high expectations of how their pupils should behave and communicate this clearly and consistently. Behaviour is typically good and pupils respond enthusiastically to their teachers in class.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire agree that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved and feel that the school keeps their children safe.
- Most pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time. The headteacher has correctly identified that a few pupils who are underachieving also have a poor record of attendance and has taken appropriate steps to tackle this.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has built a strong senior leadership team. The deputy headteacher and four phase leaders (those responsible for different age groups) provide good models of practice to their colleagues and two of the phase leaders also provide strong leadership for English and mathematics. Together, they have tackled the serious weaknesses in teaching and have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further.
- Systems for checking on the quality of teaching are improving. The headteacher collates the information from frequent visits to lessons and checks of pupils' work to gain an overview of teachers' skills, and plan support if necessary. She has not checked teachers' planning to ensure that pupils in 'focus groups' have the support they need in lessons so that they can catch up with their classmates.
- The impact of additional support programmes is not checked on or assessed sufficiently. The lack of clear targets for individual support programmes makes it difficult for school leaders and the governing body to judge how well they are working.
- The skills of subject leaders and some middle leaders are at an early stage of development and these staff are not fully effective in influencing or driving school improvement. Action plans for subjects require improvement because they do not have clear, measurable short-term or long-term targets. The coordinator of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has recently attended a training course to develop her skills. The deputy headteacher is working alongside subject leaders to support their development. It is too early to see the impact

of this training.

- The new curriculum is becoming embedded. Trips and visits provide pupils with memorable experiences and develop their understanding and appreciation of history, music and theatre. Parents confirm that their children really enjoy the topics such as Castles and Tudors. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in different subjects. School leaders have plans to review the curriculum at the end of this year to ensure that activities in all subjects offer clear progression of skills and the right level of challenge to older pupils.
 - Procedures to appraise teachers' performance have been tightened. The headteacher ensures that targets for improvement are linked to whole-school priorities and pay progression is related to good performance in the classroom.
 - The safeguarding of pupils has a high priority and all statutory requirements are met.
 - The school's church foundation and the strong emphasis on values such as tolerance, cooperation and appreciation make a significant contribution to the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
 - Support from the local authority has been effective in helping the school to remedy inadequate aspects. Advisers from the local authority have worked closely with school leaders. Together, they have ensured that support and training for staff have been well timed and tailored to need.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have made good use of a wide range of training to build their knowledge and understanding of the school's work. Most visit the school regularly. Governors are confident to ask questions and minutes of meetings of the governing body show that they challenge school leaders effectively. The headteacher provides detailed reports to the governing body on standards and pupils' progress. Governors have rigorous procedures to appraise the performance of the headteacher. They receive information about the performance of other teachers, but not how this relates to salary progression. The governing body knows how the money from the pupil premium funding has been spent and the governors are informed about the progress that pupils make. Because support programmes do not have measurable targets, it is difficult for governors to be sure that this funding has been used effectively.
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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	125141
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	420426

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Masters
Headteacher	Jane Gorecka
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 January 2012
Telephone number	01306 883474
Fax number	01306 743328
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