

Sibertswold Church of England Primary School

Coldred Road, Shepherdswell, Dover, CT15 7LF

Inspection dates 20–21 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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:

- Teaching over time has not been good enough for some pupils to make the rates of progress of which they are capable, especially in writing.
- The achievement of groups of pupils receiving additional support, including those with special educational needs and those in receipt of the pupil premium, is uneven across different year groups.
- Classroom displays in English and mathematics do not provide enough guidance or prompts to support pupils with mastering new work.
- Some pupils are too reliant on adult support. They have not fully developed the skills of independent learning and are not always confident to tackle new work themselves.
- Pupils do not have enough regular opportunities to respond to teachers' marking in their books.
- School improvement planning does not include clear goals, milestones and ways of measuring success so that school leaders, including governors, know how effective their actions are.
- Observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' books are not yet closely linked to the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.

The school has the following strengths:

- The school provides a wealth of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These values underpin the curriculum and are at the core of the school's ethos.
- Teaching has started to improve this year and this is leading to rising attainment across all year groups.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are polite, friendly and well behaved.
- Teachers have high expectations of the more able pupils and usually plan activities which present a good level of challenge.
- Parents and carers are highly supportive of the work of the school and are proud of the caring ethos which the school fosters so effectively.
- Governors know the school well and are fully committed to its continuing improvement.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by two inspectors. They observed 15 lessons or part lessons. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspection was carried out at the same time as an inspection at the federated school, Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School. The two lead inspectors met jointly with members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors held meetings with school staff and groups of pupils. They also listened to pupils read, met informally with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day, attended an assembly and observed behaviour at playtimes and lunchtime.
- The inspectors studied a range of documentation, including policies and records of behaviour, safeguarding arrangements, records of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's monitoring and planning documentation, minutes of governing body meetings and information related to the performance and salary progression of staff.
- During the inspection, 41 responses to Parent View were taken into account, as well as nine responses to questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Sue Quirk, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Hayes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sibertswold Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average sized primary school. In January 2012 it entered into a federation with Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School. The headteacher is executive headteacher of both schools and there is a single governing body overseeing the work of both schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is similar to the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is lower than average.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Approximately one tenth of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families). This is lower than average. There are currently no looked after children or children of service families at the school.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs which are managed by the governing body and which formed part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching promotes pupils' independent learning more effectively by:
 - making sure that classroom environments support pupils' learning in English and mathematics, displaying vocabulary relevant to current work and examples of how to tackle problems and approach new learning
 - reducing pupils' reliance on additional adults and encouraging them to find out things for themselves.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - making sure that additional funding to support the learning of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is effectively targeted and closely checked so that they make more rapid progress
 - ensuring that all teachers have the highest expectations for the rates of progress made by all groups of pupils, especially lower attaining pupils
 - making sure that teachers' marking tells pupils exactly what they need to do to improve, and giving pupils more regular and frequent opportunities to respond to marking in their books.
- Sharpen the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - including more precise goals, milestones and success measures in the school improvement plan so these can be used to carefully check the impact of actions taken
 - ensuring that checks on the quality of teaching are closely linked to pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Over the last three years there has been a declining trend in attainment at Key Stage 1. However, inspection evidence indicates that this is likely to be reversed this year, with the most recent assessments showing improvements in pupils' attainment in all subjects. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 have fluctuated over recent years but improved in 2012 and were above the national average in English and mathematics.
- Rates of progress in writing have not been fast enough and not enough pupils reached the levels of which they were capable in the 2012 tests. Inspectors found that a whole-school focus on improving writing and rigorous, regular checking of pupils' progress means the school has been successful in improving attainment in writing across all year groups.
- Children start school with skills and abilities that are generally in line with those expected for their age, although many are highly articulate and have advanced communication skills. Over the last three years the proportion of children reaching the early learning goals (the expected levels for all children at the end of the Reception Year) has improved year on year from below national results in 2010 to above national in 2012. Current assessments indicate that most children will reach the expected levels in 2013.
- The learning and progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have been inconsistent because, until recently, additional support was not always targeted precisely enough. Leaders and managers are now making sure that the additional help these pupils receive, with short, tightly focused support sessions and more individual tuition, is effective in helping them make faster progress, although some are still over-reliant on adult support.
- The progress of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is variable across different year groups. In the 2012 national tests, the very small proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals were six terms behind their peers in English and five terms behind in mathematics. Rates of progress for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding currently in the school are improving because the school is now targeting the use of the funding more effectively. As a result, the gap between their attainment and that of their peers is closing rapidly.
- Pupils achieve well in reading across the school and benefit from well-taught, regular, guided reading sessions as well as opportunities for individual reading sessions in school provided by a large number of volunteers from the local community. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected score at the end of the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check (a check on how well pupils are able to link sounds and letters) was above the national level.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teaching over time has not been targeted precisely enough to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. More effective teaching this year is supporting more rapid and consistent progress and rising attainment across all year groups.
- Teachers mark work regularly and conscientiously but do not always identify clearly enough what pupils need to do next in order to consolidate and improve their learning. Pupils do not consistently respond to marking in books, which means they sometimes miss opportunities to correct their work.
- Teachers plan their lessons carefully and work is generally set at the right level of difficulty for individual pupils. Occasionally, whole-class introductions to lessons are not appropriate for all groups of pupils. Teachers have high expectations of the more able pupils and usually plan activities which present a good level of challenge. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- Teaching assistants are generally deployed well to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils.

They usually provide appropriate targeted support for individuals and groups. However, some pupils, particularly lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, sometimes depend too heavily on their support and are reluctant to tackle work independently.

- Pupils respond well to solving problems which are meaningful to them. Pupils in Year 6 relished the challenge of learning how to read a bus timetable because this is a skill they will need as they move on to secondary school.
- Classrooms are attractive and pupils' work is displayed well. However, there are not enough prompts to support current learning with examples of how to tackle problems. Although most groups of pupils made good progress in a Year 5 lesson on reflection, translation and rotation of shapes, they would have been able to complete their work more quickly and confidently if they had been able to refer to strategies for completing the tasks.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support learning across all subjects and pupils' progress in this area is good. Pupils in Year 3 were able to use a range of techniques to publish posters for a toy sale to raise funds to save the rainforest.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good because all staff have positive relationships with pupils and a consistent approach to behaviour management. Pupils are polite, courteous and kind to adults and to each other. Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because pupils occasionally become distracted when whole-class introductions are not appropriate to their needs.
- Parents, carers and staff agree that behaviour in and around the school is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school because they know adults will take any concerns seriously. They told inspectors how much they appreciated the school's prompt action to keep them safe by immediately notifying parents and carers and asking them to come to the school to collect their children, after a recent serious incident in the village.
- Levels of supervision are good, including in the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school successfully fosters good relationships and ensures there is no discrimination. Pupils play and learn well together and demonstrate high levels of respect towards each other.
- Pupils say bullying 'never happens' but confirmed that when occasional incidents had taken place in the past, they were immediately dealt with. The school's own records confirmed incidences of bullying are rare. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and of the different types of bullying, such as racism and cyber bullying. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- The school has successfully worked hard to promote the importance of regular attendance. Pupils are generally punctual and rates of attendance are high.

The leadership and management require improvement

- School improvement planning lacks a sharp focus with clear goals, milestones and the means to measure success criteria. This means that school leaders, including governors, do not yet have a full enough understanding of how effective their actions are.
- Regular checking of the quality of teaching and holding teachers to account for the rates of progress of pupils in their class have led to improvements in planning, levels of pupil engagement, a closer match of tasks to pupils' abilities and the effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the curriculum. Leaders are aware that it is now necessary to make sure that observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' books are firmly linked to the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.
- The school has detailed policies and procedures for improving reading, writing and mathematics, which are mirrored across the federation. Pupils are benefiting from consistent approaches to assess and track their progress across the school.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and reflects the school's determination that spiritual, moral, social and cultural development should be central to all aspects of school life. Pupils are well prepared for transitions at all stages across the school.
- The federation has provided teachers with good opportunities for professional development which have improved their practice and further developed the skills of subject leaders. Leaders at all levels are enthusiastic and ambitious for pupils to achieve well in all aspects of school life.
- Recent improvements in the quality of teaching, the effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the school's work to ensure high rates of attendance demonstrate capacity for further improvement. Areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been addressed.
- Links with parents and carers and the local community are strong. Parents and carers are highly positive about the school, recognising that their children are safe, happy and achieving well.
- The local authority provides light touch support to this school. There has been no recent external validation of the quality of teaching and learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed and active members of the school community. They have a wide range of relevant skills and expertise. They are knowledgeable about many of the strengths of the school and increasingly on the improvements that the school needs to make to ensure that all groups of pupils make the progress of which they are capable. They know the school well through regular visits to the school, meetings with governors of other schools, information received from national organisations supporting schools and through the information provided by the executive headteacher. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
 - Governors understand what the data about the school tells them about how well pupils are learning and the quality of teaching. They know that the gaps between the achievement of pupils receiving extra support through the pupil premium and the achievement of other pupils in the school have been too wide in the past but are now closing. They also ensure that performance management and staff progression on the salary scales are linked to the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.

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	118691
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	408942

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Webster
Headteacher	Liz Bird
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 June 2009
Telephone number	01304 830312
Fax number	01304 831386
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