

St Matthew's High Brooms

Church of England Voluntary

Controlled Primary School

Powder Mill Lane, High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9DY

Inspection dates

5 – 6 June 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

- Pupils' attainment is very low especially in writing and mathematics. Pupils make inadequate progress. Consequently, many pupils leave the school without the basic skills they need for their secondary education.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Over a period of three years leaders have been ineffective in improving teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- There were no middle leaders until recently. Staff were not given opportunities to develop their expertise and, as a result, some became demoralised and staff absence rose.
- Some teaching assistants are not able to support pupils adequately as they have not had appropriate training.
- Performance management arrangements for staff are not sufficiently well established and inadequate teaching has not been tackled in a timely or systematic way.
- Until recently, there were no systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress. As a result, poor progress was not identified. This has resulted in pupils having gaps in their knowledge and understanding, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers are not adequately trained in how to assess pupils' work and there are gaps in some teachers' subject knowledge, particularly for mathematics. Teaching overall is inadequate.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and their families are well supported through good pastoral care.
- The actions of the governing body are helping to drive improvement.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception, where teaching and what the school offers is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons and one assembly.
- Pupils were observed during morning and lunchtime breaks.
- Two groups of pupils were heard reading.
- Inspectors held discussions with the school's senior leaders, a group of governors, two representatives from the local authority and a group of pupils. The 40 responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View), were also considered.
- The inspection team looked at school documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the action plan which has been prepared by the current interim leaders, information about how well pupils currently in the school are progressing, minutes of meetings, safeguarding documents and information about staff appraisal.

Inspection team

Jill Thewlis Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Carole Skinner	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Wollaston	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.

Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.

Information about this school

- Following the departure of the previous headteacher in December 2012, an executive headteacher was appointed to work with a part-time head of school and a full-time deputy headteacher. These appointments are not substantive and the executive headteacher divides her time between her own school and St Matthew's.
- St Matthew's is a larger than average primary school and is growing.
- The number of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium, which in this school is additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and supported at school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just below that found nationally.
- In 2012, the school did not meet the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards of teaching to be good or better by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in all lessons
 - eliminating inconsistencies in the way teachers assess pupils work and how they mark it
 - training teaching assistants so they are better able to support pupils
 - ensuring that teachers accurately match the tasks they provide to the abilities of the pupils to ensure all are fully engaged, interested and challenged.
- Ensure that all pupils make at least expected progress, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that both teachers and teaching assistants have a thorough subject knowledge of mathematics
 - providing opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve real-life problems
 - ensuring that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those supported by pupil premium funding do at least as well as similar pupils nationally and close the gap with other groups, particularly in mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils build on their writing skills as they move through the school and providing them with opportunities to practise and develop these skills in a range of subjects.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of the newly appointed Key Stage and subject leaders so they are better able to monitor teaching and progress within their areas of responsibility

- having a clear structure for the teaching of mathematics across the whole school to ensure that the needs of all learners are met
 - ensuring that all pupils have a wide range of experiences and are taught in ways that suit their different ways of learning
 - embedding the recently introduced performance management arrangements for all staff.
-

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Most children enter the Reception class with skills just below those expected for their age. Provision and teaching are good and, as a result, they make good progress initially. At the end of Year 6, attainment in English and mathematics is low. This indicates inadequate achievement over time.
- Teaching in Key Stage 1 is of mixed quality and pupils' progress has been hampered because teachers' skills in assessing how well pupils are doing have not been well developed. As a result, the tasks given to pupils do not always match their abilities.
- Achievement in mathematics is inadequate. This results from weak teaching and, particularly, pupils not being given time to consolidate their learning before moving on to other areas of mathematics. Some members of staff do not have sufficient subject knowledge and pupils become confused.
- Pupils have poor calculation skills and do not always use the most efficient method for calculating because there is no coherent strategy for teaching mathematics across the school.
- Tasks are not always well matched to the abilities of pupils and not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematical skills in real-life situations. Too many worksheets are used which do not always deepen pupils' understanding of concepts.
- Pupils are now making better progress in English. This is due to recent staff training; pupils now have a clearer idea of what is expected of them. The work seen in books shows an improving picture. Pupils' work seen in the lessons observed and the school's own tracking data show that pupils in Year 6 are on course to meet the floor standard this year. However, attainment and progress are not improving so well in all year groups and in some progress is not rapid or sustained.
- Pupils' progress in writing is still limited because they have too few opportunities to write in subjects other than in English. This means that pupils do not develop adequate skills to write for different purposes and in different styles.
- Achievement in the Year 1 phonic screening check in 2012 was above average. This is because phonics is taught systematically and well. Pupils enjoy reading and are able to apply their skills in phonics to decode unknown words.
- The progress of pupils who are entitled to free school meals and who are supported through the pupil premium funding has been one term behind that of similar pupils nationally in English and three terms behind in mathematics. The gap with other groups is narrowing in English but not in mathematics. Similarly, the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below that found nationally.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Until the appointment of the interim leaders, staff absence rates were high. Pupils were taught by a high number of temporary teachers who did not know their abilities well enough. A greater sense of purpose and drive from interim leaders has been communicated to all staff and this, together with good quality training and support, has led to recent improvements in teaching.
 - Until recently, teachers did not assess pupils' work accurately and, as a result, did not plan next steps in learning that were challenging and appropriate for each pupil. The training has resulted in more accurate assessment information and a better match of tasks to pupils' abilities. However, this is not yet firmly established across the whole school.
 - Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in English to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in a history lesson, pupils did not use the books available to carry out research of their own, relying instead on the information provided by the teacher. Consequently, pupils did not make as much progress as they should have done.
-

- Interim leaders have correctly identified that teachers should create more opportunities for speaking and listening activities in order to raise standards. However, not all teachers are doing so.
- Teachers often talk for too long at the beginning of the lesson. Pupils have to wait for too long before they can begin their tasks even when they already understand what is expected of them. Some teachers and teaching assistants do not question pupils deeply enough and do not always wait for pupils to respond.
- Some teachers mark pupils work thoroughly identifying next steps for pupils and ensuring that errors are corrected. This is not the case in all classes and consequently pupils do not always make the progress they should.
- Teaching in Reception is good because the work is well matched to children's abilities. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities that engage children well so that they are enthusiastic and make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Behaviour is not always good because, in some lessons, pupils lose interest as they are not appropriately challenged. As a result, this is a distraction for the whole class and slows learning.
- Some teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of behaviour and allow pupils to call out or talk over others, which hinders learning. In other lessons, teachers' high expectations ensure good behaviour and a keenness to learn.
- Pupils play well together. They get on with one another and enjoy coming to school because it is a welcoming and pleasant place to be. Staff help to promote positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults.
- Pupils understand different forms of bullying and know how to keep safe. They are confident that poor behaviour, including bullying, will be dealt with effectively by staff.
- Attendance is just below average. The school is dealing with this effectively through meetings with parents and outside agencies. As a result of these meetings, attendance is improving and key staff identify and address pupils' particular needs.
- Pastoral care is strong and the school works with families whose circumstances make them vulnerable to support them. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because the school's leaders did not address the poor performance of pupils or weak teaching quickly enough. Basic systems were not in place to monitor the progress of pupils or the performance of teachers.
 - The local authority has provided appropriate support in securing the temporary leadership of the school and in providing training for staff. The interim leaders have achieved much in a few months, but have not yet had time to secure the desired outcomes in terms of rapid and sustained improvement in pupils' attainment and progress.
 - The current leaders of the school are tackling the many issues with energy and determination. They have successfully communicated their enthusiasm to others, resulting in a common purpose to improve outcomes for pupils. The morale of staff has improved.
 - Until very recently, there had been no arrangement for staff appraisal and, as a result, inadequate teaching had not been dealt with. Appraisal arrangements are now in place but are not yet fully established.
 - The curriculum does not meet the needs of all learners. Key subjects are not taught in a sufficiently structured and systematic way; consequently, pupils make inadequate progress because they lack understanding of key concepts. There is no effective policy for promoting numeracy across the curriculum. Current leaders have begun to introduce improvements to the way English is taught and this is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress, as seen
-

in pupils' books and in lessons.

- Until recently, there was no whole-school system for tracking pupils' attainment and progress. New leaders have introduced a rigorous tracking system which provides teachers with better information about their pupils. Teachers now have the means to plan more accurately work that builds on what pupils can already do and understand. However, this is not yet done well enough by all teachers.
 - The new systems for monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those entitled to support through the pupil premium are particularly thorough. There is a very clear plan of how pupil premium funding is spent and there is an inbuilt system to record the impact of this spending. While this is a promising initiative it is too soon to see its impact.
 - Recently appointed Key Stage and subject leaders are ably supported by senior leaders. The work of these middle leaders, though developing well, is yet to demonstrate its full impact on pupils' learning and progress.
 - The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education has been strengthened by the introduction of more engaging topics. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' social skills and moral awareness. All pupils are treated equally and discrimination is not tolerated.
 - The school meets safeguarding requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors accept that, in the past, they failed to adequately challenge the school. However, they had concerns about the school and raised these with the local authority in September 2012. As a consequence of this action, and the concerns of the local authority itself, an independent review was commissioned which resulted in the current, interim leadership being installed in January 2013. Governors now have an accurate picture of the school including the underachievement of pupils and the quality of teaching. They fully understand where improvements are needed. They are clear about pupil premium funding and how it is allocated. Governors know about staff appraisal and their role in that process, including the link between performance and pay. Governors are now kept fully informed and have reorganised themselves to make them a more efficient body. They have undertaken a skills audit and are pro-active about undertaking training. Consequently, an external audit is not recommended as part of this inspection.
-

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	118709
Local authority	Kent County Council
Inspection number	405811

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	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hobden
Interim Executive Headteacher	Judith Lees
Date of previous school inspection	4 – 5 November 2010
Telephone number	01892 528098
Fax number	01892 517694
Email address	headteacher@st-matthews.kent.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

