

Newlands Primary School

Dumpton Lane, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 7AJ

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses. It is not good because

- Too many pupils make inadequate progress, particularly the younger pupils. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is low.
- Teaching is inadequate. Too much teaching requires significant improvement. Teachers do not expect enough of pupils or provide work that is matched well enough to their needs and prior attainment. Pupils are not involved enough in judging and improving their own work.
- Pupils' behaviour is improving but pupils are not always ready and willing to learn and this aspect of their behaviour requires improvement.
- Attendance is poor and too many pupils do not attend school regularly.
- Leadership and management require improvement because, despite recent improvements, leaders, managers and governors have not been effective in raising pupils' attainment and improving teaching sufficiently.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership team has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Recent improvements demonstrate a capacity for further improvement.
- The new executive board has an ambitious vision for the school and is challenging and supporting the school to be at least 'good' within two years.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s information on pupils’ current progress, planning documents, checks carried out by leaders on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding children.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and one additional response sent to inspectors. They spoke to a group of parents and noted the contents of two complaints about the school received before the inspection.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and met with a group of pupils. They discussed the work of the school with the Chair of the Local Governing Body and representatives of the Kemnal Academy Trust. They also listened to the views of a range of school staff.
- Inspectors observed 26 lessons, four jointly with the headteacher or assistant headteacher. In addition, they made a number of short visits to observe support and small-group sessions for pupils at risk of falling behind.
- The inspection team reviewed the responses to 29 staff questionnaires completed during the inspection.

Inspection team

Robert Ellis HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Ann Debono

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Carol Vant

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- The school achieved academy status in September 2012 and governance is the responsibility of a local governing body and an executive board that provides strategic direction for five Thanet Primary Academies.
- The majority of the pupils are White British and the proportion speaking English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is government funding provided for looked after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent or carer in the armed forces, is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of pupils and increase the proportion of teaching that is consistently good and outstanding by:
 - giving all pupils regular opportunities to correct and improve their work after it has been marked
 - making sure all teachers have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour and the work pupils produce
 - making sure teachers use assessment information to plan work that is matched to the needs and capabilities of the different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that lessons are delivered at a brisk pace, motivate pupils to do well and encourage them to have positive attitudes to learning
 - promoting pupils' independence and resilience so that pupils have high aspirations and are able to be active participants in their learning and can judge their own progress.
- Build on improvements to attendance to ensure all pupils attend as regularly as they can and are punctual to school.
- Strengthen further the capacity of leadership and management at all levels to sustain improvement by:
 - rapidly putting into place the plans that the new executive governors have for asking challenging questions and holding the school to account for improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement
 - implementing the planned procedures to manage the performance of staff so that all teachers are accountable for improving teaching and learning
 - creating an effective and sustainable long-term structure for leadership and management so that the school is led and managed in all subjects and key stages as well as at senior levels.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge, skills and abilities below the levels typically seen for their age. They make limited progress up to the end of Key Stage 1 and rates of progress vary as pupils move through the school. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2, but pupils do not make up enough ground to achieve their full potential.
- Standards of attainment, particularly by the end of Year 2, are low and do not show signs of improvement. Too many pupils are working at levels which are well below the expectation for their ages.
- Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are improving. School information and current work show that pupils' progress is accelerating so that, although attainment is below national averages, the gaps are closing.
- A more consistent approach to teaching the sounds that letters make (often known as phonics) is helping younger pupils with their reading. Pupils were observed applying their phonic skills to read unfamiliar words and to help with the accuracy of their writing. In some classes, the high noise levels make the teaching of phonics less effective.
- The majority of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and are supported by school action or school action plus are making progress at similar rates to the others in school. A small minority of these pupils have poor attendance and have made little progress this year.
- The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium varies between year groups. Some have made good progress because the extra funding is used effectively to provide good individual and small-group support to ensure that pupils catch up. Other pupils in this group have made less progress because of weaker teaching in their mainstream classes. Overall, this group of pupils is about one year behind their peer groups in both English and mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress at the same rates as others in their peer groups.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make the necessary progress from their starting points.
- Although it has improved recently, the impact of teaching over time has not enabled pupils to make rapid and sustained progress.
- Pupils often have limited opportunities to be actively involved because teachers spend too much time talking when introducing and explaining tasks, and going over previously learned work. Consequently, they do not have enough time to practise and develop the skills they need for the next steps in their learning.
- A small, but increasing, proportion of teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide stimulating and engaging lessons where tasks and activities are pitched at the right level for the different groups of pupils in the class. In these lessons, pupils respond positively and make good or better progress.
- Teachers do not always provide opportunities for pupils to check their own and others' work so that they have more responsibility for their own learning.
- Marking is variable across the school and, although books are marked regularly, pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond to the teachers' comments. This means improvements are not made consistently.
- Teaching assistants are generally supportive, particularly with the more vulnerable pupils. However, they are sometimes underused in whole-class activities that are led by a teacher and, in a few cases, they intervene too quickly and do not allow pupils to develop independence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils **require improvement**

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is not always good. When lessons fail to engage or challenge them, pupils sometimes behave inappropriately and learning time is lost.
- Staff management of pupils' behaviour is variable and it is not always effective. Pupils do not manage their own behaviour to a high enough standard and they expect that adults will manage their behaviour for them.
- Pupils often take a relaxed view about working independently and waste time talking to others or do not concentrate on the task they have been set. Some pupils lack resilience and will stop working at the first challenge and, too often, pupils who do not understand what they are expected to do will not seek help but simply wait until someone notices them. A significant minority of pupils does not listen well and expects instructions to be repeated.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school, although some raised concerns about pupils sometimes being unkind to each other. They understand that some situations are potentially unsafe and have effective strategies to keep themselves safe. Pupils' knowledge of how to deal with bullying has been heightened through a variety of activities during anti-bullying week.
- The school recognises that there are incidents of bullying. When they do occur, staff deal with them appropriately, but the outcomes of the actions taken are not always communicated to the injured party so there is a perception that the issue has not been addressed.
- The school has recently taken a less tolerant approach to inappropriate behaviour and the number of exclusions has increased significantly. The rate of exclusions is now starting to fall as pupils become more aware of the higher expectations regarding their behaviour and the consequences of misbehaving.
- Despite recent improvement, attendance is well below average and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Pupils' punctuality is better but needs to improve further in order to be good.

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- Leadership is not yet good because leaders and managers at all levels have not had sufficient impact on pupils' achievement and on the quality of teaching, both of which require further improvement.
- New systems are being developed to make sure that the management of teachers' performance and salary progression are linked directly to teachers' impact on pupils' progress.
- Teachers who are not teaching well are challenged strongly and supported to improve. The school can show examples of where coaching and support have enabled teachers to significantly improve their practice and become more effective in the classroom.
- Teachers have been supported to help them be more accurate in judging the levels that pupils are working at. Close scrutiny of teachers' judgements shows that most now have accurate information from which to judge future progress.
- Additional experienced staff have been seconded to the school to strengthen and develop leadership capacity. This has enabled the school to begin to accelerate the pace of improvement.
- The school has begun to review all aspects of its work more robustly and has appropriate systems to track and monitor pupils' progress. Leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and they are now acting swiftly to address any weaknesses and remove barriers to future progress.
- Middle leadership is underdeveloped. Consequently, senior leaders have to undertake many of the activities that would normally be led by middle leaders. Recruitment difficulties have impeded the development of this tier of leadership and management.
- Pupils are taught a broad range of subjects and topics, supported by a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. The school recognises that the current curriculum is adequate but does not meet the needs of all pupils well enough. A thorough review and revision of the curriculum are underway.
- The school has strong links with the local community. For example, pupils benefit from using the

science facilities at a local independent school.

- The views of parents are sought and the recent anti-bullying initiative resulted from concerns raised by the results from analysing a school questionnaire to parents.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The local governing body has previously not been effective in holding the school to account. Governors have increased their understanding of information on pupils' progress and have had training to help them monitor the quality of teaching and review it in relation to their performance management. Governors also ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed, including pupil-premium funding. Although they know how this money is spent, they lack a precise understanding of the impact of the initiatives funded by the pupil premium. Governors ensure that arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements.
- The new executive board reviews the school's progress every six weeks and has commissioned senior staff from successful local schools to support and judge progress. For example, a consultant is now working one day per week to improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This work is at an early stage. A review of leadership and management has been completed and some beneficial changes have been made. A new leadership structure will be in place at the start of the next academic year, which has clearer lines of accountability.

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	138436
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	422920

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

Type of school	Academy sponsor led
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Moorehouse
Headteacher	Jo Wetherell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01843 593086
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