

# Christ Church Church of England Primary Academy, Folkestone

Brockman Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1DJ

**Inspection dates** 27–28 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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

- The proportion of pupils making the progress they should varies between year groups.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, stronger in some year groups than others.
- Some teachers do not check on pupils' progress regularly enough during lessons so the pace of learning dips.
- Responsibilities for leading improvements in the school have not been shared widely enough between teachers.
- Marking does not yet ensure that all pupils are fully involved in improving their work.
- Work is sometimes too hard or too easy for pupils of different abilities, so that their progress in learning slows.

### The school has the following strengths

- Positive relationships within the school lead to a strong sense of community. Senior leaders, including governors, are determined for the school to improve.
- The school's new programme for teaching letters and sounds (phonics) ensures that skills are now improving quickly.
- Pupils behave well, feel safe and know all about how to keep themselves safe in different situations.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 21 lessons, of which three were joint observations made with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons, an assembly, the breakfast club and listened to pupils read.
- They held meetings with leaders and managers, staff and pupils, members of the governing body and the headteacher of a local school.
- Inspectors met both formally and informally with parents and carers, and took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- They observed the school’s work and looked closely at a range of documentation, including the school’s information about pupils’ progress, the school’s checks on its own effectiveness, the development plan, moderation reports of pupils’ standards, the governing body minutes, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspectors analysed 44 questionnaires from staff.

## Inspection team

Gay Whent, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Angela Podmore

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The school is a member of the Folkestone Ethos Church schools' partnership, which includes a national leader of education.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception Year classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. These pupils have a variety of barriers to learning, including behavioural, social, physical and emotional needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (extra 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) is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. The proportion of those pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. At the time of the inspection, pupils with 14 different languages attend the school.
- A significant number of pupils join the school at times other than at the beginning of the school year.
- This school converted to become an academy on 1 March 2013. When its predecessor school, Christ Church Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory overall.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- There is a breakfast club on the school site. It is managed by the governing body and therefore formed part of this inspection.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that all teachers:
  - make sure that what pupils have to learn is always clear and precise so that they know exactly what they are expected to achieve
  - plan and provide clear 'next steps' for learning for pupils matched to their learning abilities
  - check pupils' understanding throughout each lesson to make sure that learning proceeds at the right pace
  - ensure that marking consistently helps pupils to reflect on how well they are doing and take greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management through:
  - defining precisely what is expected with respect to the responsibilities of subject leadership so that teachers are more knowledgeable about how well their pupils are achieving over time and can adapt their planning to meet pupils' needs even more accurately.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Rates of progress vary through the different age groups and across the year. Evidence from observations of lessons, and looking at pupils' work, together with school data, show that pupils are not making consistently good progress throughout the school. As a result, although the school's targets for attainment at the end of the year were reached, achievement requires improvement.
- The progress of those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is variable across the school. Those who do make good progress benefit from being taught in small groups rather than in the whole class. This is because the support and range of resources they receive ensure that their needs are carefully assessed, and the help and guidance provided for them are regularly reviewed and modified if necessary.
- The new systematic approach to teaching of phonics, adopted because standards in pupils' phonic knowledge in Year 1 were previously well below average, is helping all pupils. As a result, pupils are making much faster progress than in the past in their reading because they confidently use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read words they cannot recognise. Standards in phonics have risen considerably and are now no longer below average.
- Children join the school with knowledge and skills that are often well below those expected for their age. They make good progress during their Reception Year as a result of consistently good teaching, although many pupils are still below average at the end of Year 1 in their writing and mathematics. Children particularly enjoy opportunities to play on their own as well as with each other, both within the classrooms and in the outdoor area. They are given stimulating things to do which place very good emphasis on speaking and listening, and thinking for themselves. This helps them to develop good personal and social skills.
- Attainment is influenced by the large numbers of pupils who join the school throughout the school year, particularly those who speak a different language. However, they do learn to speak English well over time owing to the school's support from specialist staff who set these pupils small, achievable targets in developing their English language skills, and this gives the pupils increasing confidence. Staff adapt their provision so that the pupils make good progress overall. Those pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are making good progress over time, particularly in relation to reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below average at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, attainment is improving so that higher numbers of pupils are making average progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding are making good or better progress compared to that of other pupils in the school as their needs are accurately identified and a range of effective strategies are put into place to improve their learning. The funding has been used to purchase a very wide range of additional programmes to enhance reading, writing and mathematics which are carried out effectively by additional support staff in smaller group sessions. Their attainment in the Year 6 national tests is similar to that of all other pupils.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Most parents or carers who responded to the online parent survey feel that their children are taught well, as confirmed by the school's most recent parental questionnaire. However, inspection evidence did not endorse this view and judged that the quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school and requires improvement. This lack of consistency results in some pupils underachieving. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection varied from inadequate to outstanding.
- Teachers carry out marking regularly but too many comments are not constructive so that pupils are not aware of what they have done well and what they need to do in order to improve. Some,

although not many, are given opportunities to respond to their teachers' comments. As a result, marking does not ensure that all pupils are fully involved in improving their work.

- Where teaching requires improvement, teachers do not take enough account of assessment information to plan work that challenges and extends pupils. This is the case when groups of pupils in those lessons are given exercises in books or worksheets to complete and there is insufficient checking of how pupils are getting on while they are working. This restricts the progress they are able to make.
- Where teaching is effective, such as in phonics lessons, all adults leading learning ensure that pupils make good progress through clear learning objectives which focus pupils on their next steps for learning, interesting activities which enable pupils to work together as well as independently, and a pace of learning which engages them all.
- Teachers ensure that pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils successfully sound out words they do not know by applying their knowledge of the sounds that letters make. Older pupils in Year 6 say that 'books take me somewhere else' or that 'hours fly by for me when I read'. The school creates a positive climate for learning to read in attractive classroom displays, which celebrate books across all ages from 'The owl who was afraid of the dark' to 'War Horse' to encourage a genuine love for reading.

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

- Pupils know how to behave well. Behaviour is good when pupils move around the school, in lessons, in the dining hall and in assembly. Older pupils enjoy the opportunity to be peer mediators. It is not yet outstanding owing to the few lessons where teachers do not pitch their work precisely enough to pupils' needs. At these points, pupils lose concentration and their engagement decreases.
- Pupils are friendly and very enthusiastic. They say they enjoy their learning. Almost all parents and carers agree that their children are happy at the school.
- Pupils are aware that 'some pupils can be silly' and that adults deal effectively with any incidents of misbehaviour. They say that there is some poor behaviour by a small number of pupils but that it is treated appropriately.
- The school is open from 8.30am when pupils can go into their classes. A breakfast club provides an earlier start and a nutritious meal for pupils at low cost. The end of the school day is staggered for pupils of different ages. This is to help parents and carers leave and collect their children at school when it is safer. The narrow, busy bend immediately outside the school can become a hazard to children's safety.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, particularly when using the internet. They say that, although bullying used to be a problem, it has improved greatly over the last two years. The headteacher is aware that bullying continues to be a concern for a small group of parents and carers. Pupils all know who to go to if they need help.
- Fostering good relationships is a very good aspect of what the school does well. Pupils of all ages, nationalities and abilities were seen to work and play well together in a harmonious atmosphere throughout the inspection. This was particularly evident in the whole-school assembly where behaviour was impeccable.
- The school takes every opportunity to celebrate good attendance and classes with high attendance are rewarded with certificates presented at the weekly celebration assembly. Attendance is currently average. Staff work closely with parents and carers to resolve persistent absence.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- The headteacher and governors share a clear plan to improve the school. There is an agreed focus on improving the quality of teaching and, although school leaders have tackled some underperformance, more remains to be done to address areas of specific weakness where

teaching requires improvement.

- The leadership team has been more active in checking what the school is doing, but roles and responsibilities of all staff, including middle and subject leaders, are not yet clearly defined in order to have sufficient impact on learning. The school has a wealth of data which, although shared with some staff, is not extensive enough to enable all staff to have a full awareness of how well pupils are progressing. As a result, the leadership and management are not yet good overall. Where this is effective, as in the introduction of the new phonics teaching programme, good and better progress has been made in a relatively short time.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted effectively. The school makes the most of its diverse community to celebrate a wider understanding of different cultures so that pupils are very well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society.
- The school is strongly focused on making sure that every pupil has similar chances. No one is discriminated against. Senior leaders and governors are constantly striving to strengthen the partnership with parents and carers.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. Pupils in Year 5 say how much they enjoyed a visit earlier in the week to Grosvenor House. One pupil described one particular activity vividly in her writing: 'I went up to the top. My legs and hands were quivering. Shockingly, I did it. As soon as I got down I had an adrenaline rush. Bouncing up and down, I kept saying I WANT TO DO IT AGAIN!'
- The school works effectively within the partnership of local schools. The support that has been given in relation to the whole-school implementation of the systematic approach to learning to read has been successful.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance of the school is strong. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and its drive to improve teaching and standards through the school's development plan. They know that pupils underperformed in the past and that this is now improving. They are keen to question what they do not understand and do so regularly in order to clarify their thinking. They know that performance management is in place and how salary decisions are linked to teachers' performance. They are aware that any underperformance is followed up by the headteacher. Governors undertake training so that they further develop their many skills and expertise in order to make an effective team. The school's finances are ably monitored and managed and, where grants can be found, these have often been applied for and secured. One such grant resulted in the school's Community Building, which has provided a base for small-group work, ensuring that children are not interrupted when working outside their classrooms in corridors. Governors are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent, what it is spent on, and how it secures an effective impact for those pupils in receipt of the funding. They know that this is to narrow the gap between those pupils and their peers. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding.

## 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>	139309
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	421705

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy Converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	408
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maeve Renard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jim Kreiselmeier
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01303 253645
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