

# St Augustine's Catholic School

Wilman Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9AL

**Inspection dates** 2–3 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 dipped below average in 2012. The rate of progress since September 2012 is inconsistent.
- There is still a gap in the progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in mathematics and writing compared with other pupils.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, especially in mathematics and writing. A substantial proportion does not enable pupils to make good progress.
- In many lessons teachers talk too much.
- Activities are not sufficiently different for different ability groups, including the more-able pupils. Pupils are not given opportunities to find things out for themselves.
- Not all teachers use, as regularly as they should, the rigorous systems for checking pupils' progress to adapt planning to push learning forward at a faster pace. Phase and subject leaders do not monitor this aspect well enough.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but they do not make sure that pupils have understood their comments and that pupils know how to improve their work.
- When managing teachers' performance, leaders do not make rigorous enough links to pupils' progress.
- Teaching and learning assistants are not used consistently across year groups and subjects for their support to be effective in raising achievement.

### The school has the following strengths:

- This school has been improving since September 2012 and at a greater pace since the arrival of the new headteacher. Pupils are beginning to make good progress, especially boys and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The governing body and staff support the headteacher's clear vision to move the school forward.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They say they feel safe and their parents and carers agree with them.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from outstanding provision which prepares them extremely well for the move to Year 1.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, four of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- They listened to pupils read and looked at their work books to see how much progress they make while they are at school.
- Meetings were held with the senior management team, with a number of subject and other leaders, with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to pupils, parents and carers, to see how they feel about the school in general.
- Inspectors looked at relevant documents, including the school's view of itself, the school's improvement plan and policies, including those relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of all pupils.
- Inspectors examined the most recent government data on the attainment of pupils in the school and the school's system for checking on pupils' progress through the school year.
- In addition, inspectors took account of the responses by 71 parents and carers to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Responses from 22 members of staff to the staff questionnaires were also considered.

## Inspection team

Mina Drever, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Philip Storey	Additional Inspector
Peter Hare	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average size primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British. Other ethnic groups include Other Ethnic, Any other White, Other Mixed backgrounds and White and Asian mixed.
- A large proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Some of these arrive in school with very little or no knowledge of English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is low.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school is one of four in a mutually supportive cluster of schools, working together to raise standards. Two of the schools are deemed good.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2013.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching by:
  - planning learning activities for different ability groups, including more-able pupils
  - making better use of teaching and learning assistants so that they work more effectively with pupils in need of support
  - making sure that lessons move at a good pace by reducing prolonged teacher talk
  - improving the teaching of mathematics by giving clearer explanations and examples of what pupils are expected to do
  - giving opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves.
- Raise achievement and accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics by:
  - making sure that teachers use tracking systems consistently so that they take actions to help any pupils at risk of falling behind to catch up
  - improving the rate of progress in mathematics and in writing of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium by reviewing their progress more regularly and by adjusting the support accordingly.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - enabling subject and phase leaders to take on effective responsibilities for their areas of teaching and learning, especially in monitoring how teachers use the tracking of progress
  - refining the way leaders manage the performance of teachers so that links to pupils' attainment and progress are more detailed.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Attainment, though still broadly average, dipped in 2012 after a slow decline since 2010. Teachers have not used the school's systems to track progress rigorously to adapt their planning on a regular basis to increase the rate of progress of pupils across all year groups.
- This year pupils' progress has improved, though not evenly across all year groups or subjects. All pupils made good progress in Years 2 and 6. Better progress was made in reading than in writing and mathematics. Year 1 pupils performed in line with the national average in the reading check.
- Boys' progress has improved in all areas. For example, teachers' assessment in July 2013 showed that a much greater proportion of Year 6 boys attained Level 4 and Level 5 in reading than in 2012.
- Those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium made very good progress in reading from September 2012 – the equivalent of nearly two-and-a-half years in three terms. Their progress in mathematics and in writing was as expected. The attainment gap with other pupils has closed in reading, in which they made better progress than other pupils. It remains one term behind in writing and mathematics.
- The pupil premium is spent on one-to-one tuition, small-group reading programmes and subsidising cultural trips for pupils. Its impact is more marked in English than in mathematics.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs making good progress in mathematics has increased this year. This is because since January 2013 they have benefited from more focused support in booster groups which are reviewed regularly. They have made progress in writing and in reading too, though less than in mathematics.
- Most of the pupils from other minority groups are also speakers of English as an additional language. Most of them achieve well because they receive good support in learning English through subject areas, for example in learning and understanding the appropriate vocabulary for mathematics.
- Children join Reception with skills at well below the levels expected. They make very good progress and the majority of them reach the required standards and are very well prepared to move to Year 1. This is because teachers and teaching assistants work well together, and with parents and carers, to track their progress meticulously. They make sure that each child reaches his or her potential.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. This has a negative effect on pupils' progress. Lessons that require improvement are found across subject areas and year groups. They are uninteresting, with too much teacher talk, inappropriate pace and too much is directed by the teacher, with no opportunities for pupils to find things out by themselves. Teachers do not plan activities which are sufficiently different for different ability groups, nor sufficiently challenging including the more-able pupils.
- Teaching assistants do not always work effectively with pupils. This is because they have not been sufficiently involved in the planning and their approach to working with pupils does not mirror that of the class teachers.
- Since September 2012 support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has improved with individual educational plans, enabling them to make faster progress in some year groups than in others. This is because teachers have been tracking progress of individual pupils, but, the review of progress has been inconsistent across the year groups.
- In the good or better lessons teachers check pupils' understanding and progress with probing questions which allow pupils to think deeply about their answers and the activities they are

involved in.

- The best lessons provided challenge, excitement and a competitive spirit, with very well-planned and managed collaborative learning, as in a Years 5 and 6 lesson. Here, a 'Harry Potter' video clip was used very effectively to enthuse pupils in search of adjectives and adverbs to describe broomsticks and how they were used.
- Marking is consistent, but it lacks sufficient comments from teachers for pupils to know what to do to improve their work or any evidence that they have read the advice and acted upon it.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children thrive in a learning environment which provides a very good balance between activities directed by teachers and those chosen by children. While 'playing' in their chosen activities, there is much learning going on with teachers and teaching assistants guiding children towards higher levels of communication, when talking about their imaginary games.

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

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They stay on task even when lessons are not very challenging. Disruption is uncommon.
- Pupils' behaviour around school is good. They are polite to everybody and towards one another and very caring too.
- School rules of conduct – 'Growing Together' – are posted everywhere around the school and pupils are very proud of them.
- Attendance has improved since 2010 and has been above average for the last two years.
- Pupils feel very safe and their parents and carers believe that their children are safe. They say that behaviour has improved a lot since the arrival of the new headteacher.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying, and if there were they would know what to do and feel very secure that teachers would do the right thing to deal with it. They understand different forms of bullying and are well informed about e-safety.
- School records show no recent incidents of bullying or any forms of discrimination. All past incidents had been duly recorded.
- The school's strategies to promote good behaviour at all times in the form of rewards and sanctions is very well appreciated by pupils and highly supported by all adults. There are excellent relationships between adults and pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is not yet outstanding because they have had, so far, no opportunities to show how they would behave if asked to find things out for themselves, especially in lessons that require improvement. This means they can be too passive in class.

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

- Leaders have not made sure that all year groups and all pupil groups make consistent progress in all areas of learning and that good teaching is consistently good across the school. They do not make rigorous enough links to pupils' attainment and progress when setting targets as part of managing teachers' performance.
- The new headteacher has strengthened the systems for monitoring teaching and tracking pupils' progress. These are beginning to improve progress, but not across all year groups. Phase and subject leaders have yet to make sure that all teachers use the systems effectively.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders share a vision for driving up standards and are fully supported in this by all staff.
- Leaders use the funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium effectively in English with appropriate intervention programmes, and as a result they make good progress. The impact of this spending is not so marked in mathematics, where an attainment gap with other pupils persists.
- Pupils with specific educational needs are accurately assessed and appropriate interventions put

in place to support them, including those with medical needs.

- The school's view of itself and school improvement plan are rigorous, accurate and linked to pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and based on a creative approach. The religious curriculum provides opportunities for cultural and moral development by studying other religions as well as Catholicism. A wealth of visits and trips enhances the social and cultural aspects of learning.
- All groups of pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. However, progress among groups has been inconsistent because not all teachers use the tracking system to adapt planning as effectively as they should.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View would recommend this school to other parents and carers.
- The local authority supports the school on a needs-only basis. It brokered the forming of the cluster of which this school is a member.
- Leadership and management meet the statutory safeguarding requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has a balanced set of skills and appropriate committees. Governors know the strengths of the school and the areas that need improving to raise standards, namely the quality of teaching. They challenge the school on every aspect including data on the school's performance and hold the headteacher to account for pupils' achievement. They support the new headteacher in all she is doing to raise achievement, including that of pupils eligible for the pupil premium. They participate in checking the work of the school and in the school's improvement plan. Governors have a good overview of the budget. They approve pay increases and promotion only if teachers meet well-defined criteria for raising achievement. The performance management of the new headteacher has recently been ratified. Governors know how the school manages teachers' performance and tackles any underperformance.

## 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>	118781
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	413041

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	315
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Dennison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jackie Warren
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18–19 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01892 529796
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@st-augustines.kent.sch.uk



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