

# St Alphege Church of England Infant School

Oxford Street, Whitstable, Kent, CT5 1DA

**Inspection dates** 9–10 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The highly effective headteacher has successfully driven through changes to improve the quality of learning for the pupils. Her ambition is shared by the whole school community and is successfully supported by the school governors.
- The school is focused on improving the achievement of the pupils. As a result, pupils now make good progress, leading to better learning in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour makes a significant contribution to how well they learn. Pupils are courteous and proud of their school, and behave equally well in and out of lessons. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- Teaching is good overall and much improved as a result of robust monitoring of professional development. Teachers' marking is effective in showing pupils what they have to do to make their work better.
- The school is successfully committed to the personal development of each pupil. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual development is an outstanding feature of the school.
- As is the case throughout the school, the youngest pupils entering both the Nursery and Reception class are cared for very well and, as a result, develop very good attitudes to learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small minority of lessons, some pupils do not learn as quickly as they could, and these pupils do not make as much progress in their learning as they are capable of.
- Although new senior leaders are beginning to undertake a more effective role in driving improvements in achievement, they need to develop this further by helping teachers improve how they use assessment information to help pupils make even better progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons or parts of lessons and seven observations were undertaken jointly with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, representatives from the local authority, groups of pupils and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors analysed parent feedback from 'Parent View' (the online survey within the Ofsted web site), taking into account 32 responses, as well as the schools own parental survey. In total they talked to 25 parents during the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of the school's work, focusing on improvements in teaching, improvements to writing and mathematics and how pupils' progress is checked.
- They looked at how well pupils' books were marked.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read and talked to them about their reading habits and interests.
- A range of documents were scrutinised by inspectors, including the school's judgements on how well it thinks it is doing, information about pupils' current progress, procedures for safeguarding pupils and key areas for improvement.
- Amongst other things, inspectors looked specifically at how well the attendance of pupils had been improved since the previous inspection.

## Inspection team

Bill James, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gary Kirkley

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Alphege Church of England Primary School is an average-sized infant school that has nursery provision. Most pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups is small but steadily increasing.
- The proportions of pupils for whom English is not their first language is well below average.
- The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding to support pupils in care, service families and those eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not provide or use any alternative provision for its pupils such as teaching in other schools or specialist units.
- The school has a Nursery as well as Reception classes that make up Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school manages its own on-site breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Make sure that teaching is consistently good or better by
  - using the expertise and good practice that already exists in the school to enable all teachers to maintain a good pace in learning so that pupils make consistently good progress in all lessons.
- Further develop the capacity of new senior leaders to maintain and develop pupils' good achievement by
  - working with teachers to share ways of using assessment data effectively to track how well pupils are doing in reading, writing and mathematics
  - effectively monitoring and evaluating the impact of assessments so that pupils' achievement improves further to be consistently high.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' attainment is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and this is an improvement from previous years. The progress that pupils have made was uneven but has consistently improved over a three-year period. As a result, pupils' achievement is good, with progress good throughout the school.
- Children enter the Nursery and Reception class with skills below those that one would normally expect. This is particularly the case with language and communication skills, where children's ability to understand instructions and talk confidently when they arrive is a particular weakness.
- Much of the initial work undertaken in these classes is to build children's confidence and, with the excellent care provided by staff, children's readiness to learn is successfully supported by very good routines such as 'Clever Hands' and 'Write Dance' to support writing.
- Children's progress is planned individually based on the intimate knowledge of the child and this results in the children making good progress by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- While pupils enter Year 1 with skills still below average overall, their good progress continues and teachers and support staff work very hard to build pupils' confidence in all subjects. They match work well to the pupils' differing abilities, have high expectations and make links between subjects whenever possible. One of the best illustrations of this was when in a mathematics lesson, pupils were adding numbers in French.
- Pupils' progress becomes more rapid in Year 2 where their confidence and attitudes to work are well developed. This confidence developed alongside a good grounding in basic skills that are successfully applied in different subjects so that pupils have the opportunity to reach higher levels of attainment.
- Writing is a strength of the school and complements the good progress pupils are making in reading. The school has focused on pupils editing their own writing as a way of getting them to understand how to make their work better and this has supported strong progress.
- There is no difference in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make the same good progress as all other pupils.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium funding. For example, the 'Numbers Counts' programme has successfully helped eight pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding reach the national expected level in mathematics in 2013. There is no significant difference between the attainment of this group as measured by average point scores in national assessments at the end of Year 2 and other of the same age in the school.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality and consistency of teaching has improved steadily over time. Teachers are well focused on individual pupils' achievement in lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan well-structured interesting lessons. They expect pupils not only to increase the amount of work they get through in a lesson but also to improve the quality of the work produced. This can be seen especially in pupils' writing books, where they undertake progressively longer writing tasks as the school year progresses and their skills develop.
- Work is well planned to meet the differing abilities of pupils in the class and this enables all pupils to make good progress in their learning over time. Teachers' marking has been systematically improved through training and consistently helps pupils understand what they have to do to make their work better.
- In a small number of lessons observed, the pace of learning was too slow and pupils did not get to be active in their learning for long periods of time. As a result, they did not make as much

progress as they should have and consequently did not achieve as much as they could have.

- There are some outstanding examples of teaching within the school where the pace of learning is good and pupils are captivated. Progress in learning is accelerated as a result. The school recognises that this good and outstanding practice could be successfully used to help all teachers in the school to further improve pupils' learning.
- Teachers have excellent relationships with the pupils, classrooms have good quality displays and there is a good atmosphere for learning. Teachers manage behaviour well and have a very good understanding of what works best with individuals and groups of pupils.
- The quality of teachers' questions is good, especially when successfully challenging more able pupils to reach higher levels. A key feature of most lessons from Nursery to Year 2 is allowing pupils to talk in partners to discuss their work, give an opinion or justify their answers to questions. Pupils value these opportunities and benefit considerably from sharing ideas and working together.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed, are very well briefed by teachers and offer good quality support to those pupils who need extra help.
- The teaching of reading is good throughout the school. From the first introduction of letter sounds in the Nursery and Reception classes, pupils develop a very positive attitude to reading. Phonics, the teaching of letter sounds, is promoted well and listening to pupils read individually confirmed this to be the case. By the end of Year 2, pupils read fluently and with expression.
- Teaching and support for those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are good and ensure that they make at least as good progress as others of the same age in the school.

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

- Outstanding behaviour has a positive effect on how well pupils learn in lessons. They appreciate the effect that poor behaviour can have, not only in disrupting their own learning, but that it can disrupt the learning of their classmates. Parents, staff and pupils are keen to say behaviour is typically excellent in and out of class.
- The high standard of behaviour is built on the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school at all levels. Pupils have very good manners, are courteous, and are proud of their school.
- These relationships are forged when the youngest pupils enter Nursery or the Reception class, where very good procedures to help the children start school and high expectations of behaviour provide children with the security they need to start learning. On this subject, one parent said, 'They offer fantastic care when they start, it's really well organised and the children know exactly what to expect every day.'
- Pupils are confident. They enjoy the opportunities to learn, describe the adults in the school as helpful and kind and they say they feel safe and secure. This is supported by parents with whom inspectors spoke or those who filled out the online questionnaire, where 100% agreed that their children are safe at school.
- Pupils had a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet and what to do if they ever felt unsafe.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour was equally evident around the school, at play times, in the lunch hall and at breakfast club. They said that there was very little or no bullying in the school and that if anything was to happen, the adults would 'sort it out quickly'.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school, and this is reflected by increased levels of attendance over the last year in particular. They enjoy the number of clubs that they can go to both in school time and after school. They are particularly looking forward to The Performing Arts Club's performance at the local Playhouse theatre.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has been highly effective in providing excellent leadership for the school, combining a commitment to pupils' personal development with securing improvements in pupils' learning. Pupils' achievement is constantly being improved as a result and the headteacher, senior leaders and governors are effectively ensuring that this continues year on year.
- This commitment to treating pupils as individuals is very important to the leadership of the school at all levels. This is recognised by the parents of the school, one of whom commented, 'The headteacher is inspirational; she and the staff genuinely know all the children.'
- Leaders at all levels work well together to ensure high quality care from all staff so that pupils feel secure and ready to learn. This has resulted in the strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is an outstanding feature of the school.
- A consistent approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching throughout the school has been a good and improving feature of school leadership. As a result, teaching is good. Teachers have been well supported and they have made consistent improvement both in the quality of work the pupils are producing and the progress individual pupils are now making in lessons.
- The leadership team have correctly identified that they need to further develop their roles in monitoring the use of assessment data, by working with teachers and evaluating how pupils' learning is improving as a result.
- The school presents a positive learning environment, with a commitment to supporting not only pupils but staff. As a consequence, staff at all levels are well qualified and many are undertaking external qualifications, supported by senior leaders and managers.
- The school offers a curriculum that successfully engages the pupils in their learning. It is diverse, and encourages pupils' personal development with subjects such as music and the performing arts areas that pupils particularly enjoy. The teaching of English and mathematics is skilfully planned into all topic work and this helps foster basic skills.
- The leadership of the school has demonstrated its capacity for continued improvements by its accurate self-evaluation, the progress it has made since the last inspection, the good and still improving teaching and the progress that pupils are making.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors work effectively to support the school and the senior leaders. All statutory requirements with regard to pupils' safety and the vetting of staff are securely in place. The local authority gives good support; for example, it has recently provided support to help governors challenge the school more effectively. This has led to the governors being able to provide greater support to senior leaders through their greater understanding of how well the pupils in the school are doing compared with pupils nationally. This knowledge is used well to provide information when setting targets for teachers, assessing their future training needs and making informed decisions about salary progression. This greater awareness is also influencing the effective use of the pupil premium. Resources are targeted to make sure that pupils eligible for this catch up on their learning and the governors have checks in place to make sure that they do. They have allocated part of this funding to support better attendance by allowing these pupils to attend the school's well-run breakfast club.

## 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>	118659
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	412686

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	221
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matthew Griffith Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lorraine Clayden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14–15 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01227 272977
<b>Fax number</b>	01227 263826
<b>Email address</b>	office@st-alphege.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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

