

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

The Durlocks, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 6AL

Inspection dates 11–12 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Achievement requires improvement because standards of attainment over time have not been high enough.
- There has not been enough good teaching over time, to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable or achieve as well as they might.
- There is not a consistently high enough level of challenge in teaching, particularly for more-able pupils.
- Teaching and the way the subjects are planned does not always give pupils enough opportunities to be resourceful and independent in their learning.
- Pupils are not always given clear enough advice in marking and do not always have enough opportunities to respond to teachers' comments to help them improve their work.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, have not yet secured good achievement and teaching over a period of time.
- Changes in leadership and management, including in the governing body, are too recent to yet be fully effective.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has made significant improvements to the school since her appointment at the start of the school year.
- The school goes the extra mile to support pupils and their families, and the inclusion manager and the family and pupil support officer work very effectively to help remove barriers to learning.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school, behave well, and feel safe and secure in school. They are polite, friendly caring and considerate.
- There are good relationships between teachers and pupils. Pupils are proud of their school, work hard and want to do well. They enjoy school, which is reflected in their above-average attendance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons or part-lessons, including some joint observations with the headteacher and another senior leader. In addition, the inspector talked to pupils about their work and listened to some of them read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff with key leadership responsibilities, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including the school's assessment of its own performance, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress, monitoring information and the safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector took account of 13 responses to the online Parent View survey and the school's own survey of parents and carers.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Peter's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The next largest group are from Czech backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average, although few are at the very early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported by school action is above average, as is the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding (the pupil premium) because they are known to be eligible for free school meals, are in the care of the local authority or are from service families is above average. At St Peter's, most of the pupils eligible for the pupil premium are those eligible for free school meals.
- The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a combined class for Reception children and Year 1 pupils.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to sustain improved progress and raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations are high enough so that they make sufficient demands on pupils, particularly those who are more able, to provide them with more challenge in their learning
 - making the most of pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning by ensuring that teaching and the planned revised curriculum gives them more responsibility and more opportunities to be resourceful, take the initiative and be more independent in their learning so they can find things out for themselves and develop their learning at a rate of which they are capable
 - ensuring that in all classes teachers' marking clearly and consistently identifies what pupils need to do next in order to improve their work, and that pupils have time to respond to, and act upon, teachers' comments.
- Ensure that the changes in leadership and management, including in the governing body, build rapidly on the current improvements to teaching and achievement so they are sustained over time.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 fluctuate from year to year because of the small and variable numbers in the Year 6 group. However, over the last three years, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been below average, although there has been an improving trend in attainment at Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, attainment overall is not high enough because pupils' rate of progress overall has not been fast enough.
- Inspection evidence and the school's most recent assessments show improvements this year in pupils' attainment, particularly in writing and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in reading and writing.
- Children start at school in the Reception class with attainment that is well below the expectations for their age. By the end of Reception, although attainment is still below national expectations in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development, most pupils have made good progress because stimulating activities promote their confidence and independence. They do particularly well in their personal development.
- Thereafter, pupils make slower progress over time because of weaknesses in the quality of some teaching and in the curriculum.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have their needs identified early and make similar progress to others. Although support is effective, particularly when they work individually or in small groups outside of lessons, their progress in lessons, like that of their peers, has not been rapid enough.
- In the 2012 national tests, the attainment of pupils who received support funded by the pupil premium was eight months behind other pupils in Year 6 in English and 16 months behind in mathematics. Rates of progress for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding currently in the school are improving and, as a result, the gap between their attainment and that of their peers is closing rapidly.
- Pupils from ethnic groups other than White British, including those of Czech heritage, and those who speak English as an additional language, currently make similar progress to others. Although they receive well-targeted support, including the few at the early stages of learning English, their progress, too, has not been fast enough.
- The school's focus on reading and writing has led to improvement in achievement for the current year groups, although achievement in mathematics is still better. Even though pupils achieve less well in writing than in reading, the gap has narrowed.
- There have been several strategies to promote reading, including the introduction of 'RED TED' (Read Every Day, Talk Every Day), which has helped to promote reading at home and in school. Pupils are enjoying reading more and motivated to gain their own 'RED TED' teddy bear.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check (the linking of sounds and letters) in 2012, taken by pupils currently in Year 2, the proportion achieving the expected result was above average. The proportion achieving the expected level in the current Year 1 is lower and the school already has plans in place to tackle this. A new whole-school approach to phonics teaching will start next term as well as the appointment of a reading manager.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Despite recent improvements, the overall quality of teaching requires improvement. Inspection evidence shows that teaching has not been good enough over time to ensure consistently good progress throughout the school.
- Teaching does not always challenge pupils sufficiently, particularly those who are more able, so that they consistently make the progress of which they are capable. When teaching does make

sufficient demands on pupils, they respond well; for example, pupils in Year 3 and 4 produced some high-quality, imaginative writing and were proud of their achievements in varying the length of sentences for effect and impact.

- Teachers mark work regularly and conscientiously but on occasion do not always identify clearly enough what pupils need to do next in order to improve their learning. When helpful pointers for improvement are given, teachers do not always give pupils opportunities to respond to these to correct and improve their work.
- Teachers do not always make the most of pupils' good behaviour and attitudes by giving them more opportunities to be resourceful and take more responsibility as independent learners.
- There are very positive relationships between teachers and pupils, and as a result, pupils want to do well and are prepared to work hard.
- A consistent feature of teaching in all classes is the opportunity for pupils to talk together to share thoughts and ideas to extend their thinking and learning. They listen to each other well and value other's opinions and views.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective because there is a good understanding of the needs of young children, and interesting and exciting activities are planned that motivate children and develop their curiosity and imagination.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school is effective in fostering good relationships. Pupils get on well together, and many told the inspector how much they enjoy school and appreciate the friendly, small-school family atmosphere where 'everyone is your friend'. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in improved, and now above-average, attendance. They say they feel safe in school and well supported by their teachers.
- Pupils particularly appreciate the various trips out; for example, pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 were very excited and enthusiastic about their trip on the first day of the inspection to a Wildlife Park, and it prompted some good writing.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and on the playground. They are helpful to visitors, well mannered and considerate towards one another. School records show that this is typical of behaviour over time. Pupils said they think behaviour is good but 'if anyone is naughty, teachers tell them off, but in the right way, with respect'. On a very few occasions, where teaching does not fully motivate or challenge pupils sufficiently, pupils can become inattentive and distracted from their learning.
- Pupils say they are not aware of any bullying but are confident to turn to staff if any problems were to arise. They understand that bullying can take different forms, such as name-calling, physical, cyber-bullying or prejudiced-based bullying.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given, such as monitors, buddies and school council members, and take them seriously. They said they would like to do more.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club get a good start to the day with a choice of healthy food, which, as a group agreed, 'sets us up for the day and helps our brains work better'. They also enjoy the social time to be with their friends.
- All of the parents and carers who responded to the online survey feel that their children behave well, feel safe at school, and are happy and well looked after. The school's own survey shows a similar picture, and inspection findings support these views.

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- The leadership and management of the school have not been sufficiently effective over time in securing improvement and its present capacity is limited by the process of change currently underway.
- The school has a clear understanding of its own effectiveness, and there is a shared understanding between senior leaders and governors of the current position and what is needed to move forward.
- The headteacher, who leads the school very well with a passion and drive, and a refusal to accept anything less than the best for pupils, has secured many new appointments and an increase in leadership capacity for the start of the next academic year.
- Changes have been carefully managed to build on current improvement in achievement and demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve further, although it has not yet produced consistently good achievement or teaching over time.
- It is acknowledged that previously weaknesses in teaching were not addressed with sufficient rigour. The quality of teaching is now checked frequently and robust action has been taken to strengthen the teaching team through support and training. Any teaching that is inadequate is not acceptable. Targets are set for teachers that are linked well with the progress pupils make, and progress for all groups is tracked rigorously and efficiently.
- The curriculum engages the interests of mixed-age classes well. Currently, the planned curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for independent learning. Senior leaders are reviewing the curriculum to correctly ensure that all aspects of learning are covered and that there is progression in skills in the subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through the school's inclusive ethos that underpins all that it does. There is a good programme of extra activities that enrich pupils' learning and broaden their experiences, and the arts have a high profile in the school. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 and 4 were performing their ballet routine at The Royal Opera House and pupils' artwork, which was a focus for community involvement, is currently exhibited at the National Gallery.
- Although the school is aware that pupils are not achieving as well as they might, leaders are strongly committed to ensuring that pupils have equality of opportunity and that pupils learn without fear of discrimination. The work of the inclusion leader, and the family and pupil support officer, make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and the school's work with families and the community, are strengths.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all requirements and consequently, pupils feel safe.
- The local authority works well with the school and closely supports the school's work in raising achievement and improving teaching.

■ The governance of the school:

The governing body is committed to the school and the drive for improvement, although it has not been as effective as it should have been over time in challenging the school. As with other aspects of the school, the governing body is going through a period of change. A new Chair started in January, and currently governors are revising the way they work and are seeking to recruit six new members. Governors in post know the school well, its strengths and priorities for improvement, and are well informed by the headteacher. They have a good awareness of how well the school is doing compared to other schools nationally, including performance data. They also have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and the impact on learning, and of how the school is now tackling underperformance. Governors know how the school spends the pupil premium funding and how effectively this helps to close the gaps between pupils who receive extra support and others in the school. The governing body meets its statutory requirements, 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

Unique reference number	118676
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	401779

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	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Champion
Headteacher	Toni Deacon
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 June 2010
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