

# Stansted Church of England Primary School

Malthouse Road, Stansted, Kent, TN15 7PH

## Inspection dates

3-4 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Teaching is not always good enough to ensure that all pupils, especially those who are capable of tackling more difficult work, achieve well.
- As a result of a lack of drive and weaknesses in leadership, the school has not improved enough since the last inspection. The capacity to improve without external support has not been demonstrated
- Governors' contributions to improving the school are hindered by uncertainties over on-going leadership issues.
- Leaders and coordinators are not clear how to fulfil their roles and responsibilities in helping the school to improve.
- Over time, teaching quality has not been effectively checked and developed.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not fully stretched or provided with stimulating activities that keep their attention.
- Pupils have few opportunities to decide what to do for themselves. As a result, they sometimes lose interest in their learning and their behaviour requires improvement.
- Teachers often take too long to explain tasks to pupils, so they have too little time to complete longer pieces of work. More-able pupils do not get on quickly to harder work.
- Pupils' progress is not always good enough. Progress in writing is weaker than reading and mathematics.
- Pupils do not all spell accurately or write with imagination. Some do not write enough. When they write in different subjects the work is sometimes not presented well.
- Activities in mathematics are rarely based upon real-life situations so pupils are not learning to apply their skills well.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use computers in day-to-day activities.

### The school has the following strengths

- The support given by the acting headteachers has bought some short-term stability to day-to-day activities and identified areas to be tackled, such as weaknesses in writing.
- Pupils are polite and want to learn.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils say they feel safe and their parents agree.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight part lessons taught by four teachers, of which two were joint observations conducted with the acting headteachers. In addition, the inspector observed playtimes, lunchtimes and the after-school club.
- He listened to a sample of pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6 and he observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, a representative from the local authority, and all teaching staff. Information was examined which related to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The inspector took account of 16 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to a few parents during the inspection. He analysed questionnaires completed by 12 members of staff and past surveys conducted by the school.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including pupils' work, the school's checks on teaching, governors' visits and meetings, planning, internal information about pupils' progress and records of behaviour and attendance, together with documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.

### Information about this school

- Stansted Church of England Primary School is much smaller than most primary schools. Three classes have pupils from more than one age group. There is one, single-age reception class.
- The headteacher has been on long-term sick leave since February 2013.
- The senior teacher managed the school for the remainder of the spring term. When the headteacher's absence continued, two headteachers from local schools provided some day-to-day support from March 2013, review assessment routines and to support teachers. A third acting headteacher has also been providing support since the beginning of July 2013. The acting headteachers are continuing to support the school only until the end of the summer term 2013.
- A below-average proportion of pupils is eligible for support through the pupil premium (funding given to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and children with a parent in the armed services).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- 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 quality of teaching so that it is typically good or better through the school by:
  - making teachers' explanations shorter and sharper so pupils can get down to work more quickly
  - ensuring that those pupils who are capable of harder work start more challenging activities earlier in the lesson
  - giving pupils more options in deciding how to complete the tasks set for them
  - planning activities in the Reception class that really stretch children, stimulate them to learn without direct adult support and motivate them to persist with an activity.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - taking concerted action to ensure the effective long-term leadership and management of the school
  - ensuring that senior leaders have the necessary skills needed to drive improvements without the need for significant external support
  - ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders and subject coordinators are clear, manageable and effective
  - making sure that routines to involve staff in monitoring and developing the quality of teaching are implemented as soon as possible
  - ensuring that the proposed external review of governance takes place as soon as possible to assess how the governing body can contribute to improving the school's effectiveness.
- Improve pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, by:

- ensuring that pupils write longer pieces of work, particularly those who are capable of higher levels
  - giving pupils more guidance on how to spell accurately and to write creatively
  - making sure that pupils' writing in other subjects is presented more carefully and completed to as high a standard as in English
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills within day-to-day activities and other subjects
  - ensuring pupils have more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems.
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## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Pupils' learning and progress have not improved sufficiently since the school's previous inspection. Although results in last year's national tests were the highest for some time, these pupils were a more-able group and made only expected progress through Key Stage 2. Pupils currently in Year 6 are not predicted to do as well this year. Although there have been some recent improvements, for example in mathematics, gaps remain in pupils' knowledge and skills. Improvements in progress have not been consistent between year groups and this is often related to the varying quality of teaching.
- Current work in pupils' books and checks on pupils' standards show that overall, Year 6 pupils have made broadly average progress through Key Stage 2. However, those pupils capable of reaching higher levels do not always make the progress that they should as they are not stretched in their learning or thinking. All pupils' attainment in writing is weaker than reading or mathematics. In 2011 and 2012, boys outperformed girls, but there are few differences in their current work.
- Teachers focus appropriately on developing pupils' literacy skills, which results in pupils knowing how to use verbs, adjectives and connectives to enhance their work. However, pupils do not all write long enough pieces of work to demonstrate this knowledge, and inconsistent spelling or predictable ideas sometimes mar their efforts. Teachers ensure pupils use their writing skills within other subjects such as history, but pupils do not always take the same level of care when presenting their writing in other subjects.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a smooth start to school in terms of developing their social skills, willingness to learn and in feeling safe. However, the activities that they participate in do not always stretch their learning sufficiently. Some activities are not enticing enough to motivate children to learn on their own, stick at them and learn more quickly. Children generally reach average levels before they start in Year 1, but this is not good progress given they start the school with abilities that are typical for their age.
- Pupils use a range of ways to help them read. Older pupils read confidently, know a range of authors and say that they read for pleasure and to gain information. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check was below the national figure last year and is below that figure this year. However, pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 read confidently and sound out letters in order to read unfamiliar words.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or those who are entitled to additional help through the pupil premium are often supported well by skilful teaching assistants, so they make quicker progress than their classmates do. Results of the 2012 national tests show pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in Year 6 were about a term ahead of their classmates in mathematics but a term behind in English. The gap in English is smaller than that seen between these groups nationally.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- There is not enough good or better teaching through the school. It has not improved sufficiently to ensure that pupils have raised their achievement since the previous inspection.
- Although teachers develop positive relationships with pupils, they do not make the most of the pupils' willingness to learn. For example, pupils are given few options to decide for themselves how to best complete their work.
- Pupils' progress slows when teachers sometimes spend too long explaining tasks or ideas before allowing pupils to get down to their work. When pupils do start individual or group work, the more able pupils usually start on the same work as others and have to finish it before commencing anything more challenging.
- There are strengths in the way that teachers mark pupils' work, providing regular comments

about how well the task has been completed and suggesting ways of improving it. Pupils sometimes helpfully respond with comments or suggestions.

- Activities are often practical, such as when Reception children searched the playing field for mini-beasts and pupils in a Year 3 and 4 science lesson visited the school pond to help them design new types of dipping nets to collect creatures in the most careful way. These experiences help to promote good engagement in learning.
- In a well-taught Year 1 and 2 lesson, pupils developed their understanding of simple subtraction of money using a 'school shop' to help them. However, this approach to make number work 'real' is not the norm. This limits pupils' opportunities to consolidate and extend their skills.
- Although pupils are generally confident users of ICT, and new tablet computers have helped to improve resources, these are used infrequently within day-to-day activities to help pupils develop their expertise in researching or presenting their work.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement because some pupils lose concentration when teachers' explanations are overly long. Pupils' willingness and enthusiasm to learn are not captured sufficiently to help them make good progress over time. Some are content just to listen rather than take a more active part in lessons, and teachers do not always challenge this through more stimulating work or activities.
- Pupils have positive relationships with each other and staff. Many pupils speak confidently and clearly, and willingly take part in discussions with a partner to clarify their thinking or to decide upon an answer. Pupils' behaviour during the inspection was often good, although parents and pupils have mixed views about whether this is typical.
- Discussions with pupils indicate they feel safe. On rare occasions when bullying has been a concern for parents or pupils, pupils say it has been quickly dealt with. Pupils acknowledged that having a number of visiting headteachers did make it hard at times to know who was in charge. All staff, supported by clear policies, ensure that discrimination of any sort is not tolerated.
- Pupils say that they generally enjoy being in the school and particularly value their journeys away from the school, such as their study visit to France, the Thames Barrier or Land Life exhibition held locally.
- The good range of artwork and displays indicates that pupils effectively develop their cultural awareness, their enquiry skills, and ability to research through studying topics based on the local environment. The school's family ethos is promoted well and pupils say they value being able to know everybody well within the school.

### **The leadership and management**

### **are inadequate**

- Leadership and management are inadequate because there has been insufficient drive to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement since the last inspection. On occasions, assessments of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress have been too generous. Current improvements are fragile and depend on external support.
- The governing body, local authority and Diocese, concerned that the pace of improvement slowed after a positive monitoring visit by Ofsted in October 2011, commissioned a review of the quality of leadership and management earlier this year. This highlighted a range of weaknesses including the way the school's effectiveness was monitored and that senior staff did not feel part of the improvement process.
- These weaknesses are reflected in the response of staff to the Ofsted questionnaire and in discussions with them. They remain unsure of their long-term roles and responsibilities in contributing to school improvement.
- Many initiatives have been put on hold as the senior teacher had a full-time role teaching a

class, which was difficult to combine with managing the school effectively during the headteacher's absence. The two acting headteachers now provide stable day-to-day leadership, but it is on a temporary basis.

- Continuing uncertainties over the leadership of the school, combined with the school's weak track record and the need for significant external support, mean the school's capacity to improve is inadequate.
  - The acting headteachers have confirmed many of the weaknesses highlighted in the leadership review, and have succeeded in identifying other key areas for improvement. Assessments by staff are now more realistic, so teachers have a better view of their teaching and pupils' achievement. However, there is no on-going system to regularly involve senior staff in monitoring and helping to improve teaching.
  - The range of subjects and topics taught provides pupils with a broad learning experience. A variety of visits, after-school clubs and links with other local schools are helping widen pupils' experiences beyond their immediate community.
  - Pupils are taught to value one another. Pupils say they enjoy fundraising for local and national charities and attending local events, such as the weekly farmers' market.
  - While parents who expressed an opinion in the questionnaire were unanimous in saying their children were happy and felt safe at school, several had reservations, largely connected with the leadership and management of the school.
  - The local authority has provided an effective level of support to governors, through its review of management routines, subsequent recommendations for action and in helping to organise external leadership support. A review of governance is due to take place next term, and the local authority is helping the governors consider a range of options for the leadership of the school from September.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governance of the school requires improvement. Governors recognised that the pace of change slowed following Ofsted's monitoring inspection in 2011. They identified weaknesses in leadership through their clear analysis of information on how the school compares with others locally and nationally, discussions with staff and school visits to gauge the progress of initiatives. They then worked with the local authority to seek to bring about improvement and commissioned the review of management routines. However, since the absence of the headteacher, governors have struggled to establish effective long-term leadership and management. While staff and pupils alike value the acting headteachers' visible presence, this significant external support masks the reality that the leadership of the school is uncertain.
    - A range of training has given governors a better understanding, for example of information on pupils' progress and of safeguarding. Governors are now clear about how well pupils who are supported through the pupil premium make progress, how good teaching is and how salary progression links to performance. They make sure that safeguarding routines and checks on staff appointments are carried out.
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## 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>	118628
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	401771
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	72
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lynn Mason
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lyn Matthews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01732 822323
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