

St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School

Buttermere Road, Orpington, Kent, BR5 3WD

Inspection dates

13–14 November 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

- Over time there has not been enough good or outstanding teaching to enable pupils to make fast enough progress to catch up from their low starting points. Pupils' overall attainment is below the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teachers' expectations are not always high enough, so work is not always well matched to pupils of all abilities to ensure they make the progress of which they are capable.
- Work is not always sufficiently demanding and there are too few opportunities for pupils to be creative and resourceful in their learning, particularly the most able pupils.
- Pupils do not do as well in writing and mathematics as they do in reading.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work are not good enough.
- The quality of marking and feedback is inconsistent across the school.
- There are not enough opportunities for teachers to share the best examples of teaching.
- The curriculum does not always provide sufficient motivating and inspiring learning opportunities..
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, do not always set tight enough deadlines to check on the impact of actions they take for improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Progress is beginning to improve and is good in Years 5 and 6.
- Recently there has been a successful focus on promoting pupils' enjoyment.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe in school. They enjoy school and their attendance has improved.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved and outcomes are better for children, which was an issue to improve in the previous inspection report.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support learning.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have a clear awareness of what needs to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed substantial parts of 15 lessons, many of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work, looked at their books and listened to some pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, other staff with key leadership responsibilities, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including the school's own check on its performance, its improvement plan, records of pupils' progress, monitoring information on the quality of teaching and safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to the online Parent View survey, the school's own survey of parents, and spoke to some parents during the inspection. They looked at 29 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bryan Meyer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Just over a half of pupils are of White British heritage. The next largest groups are pupils of Gypsy Roma heritage or Black African heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding (pupil premium) because they are eligible for free school meals, are in the care of the local authority or are children from service families, is well above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- A nursery, which will be inspected separately, is attached to the school's Early Years Unit.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations for what pupils of different abilities can achieve
 - providing work that is more precisely matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities
 - extending the learning and achievement of pupils, particularly the most able, by providing challenging work and more opportunities for developing creativity and resourcefulness as learners
 - ensuring that all pupils know how they can improve their work through consistently good marking and feedback.
- Raise standards and ensure that all pupils make rapid progress to catch up especially by:
 - improving writing, particularly presentation and handwriting skills and spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - developing pupils' understanding and use of mathematical language and mental calculation skills to accelerate learning.
- Ensure that leaders and managers:
 - build imaginative, inspiring and motivating teaching and learning experiences into the curriculum
 - provide more opportunities for teachers to share good practice
 - set tight deadlines for checking on the impact of actions to accelerate the pace of improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, over time, progress has not been fast enough for pupils from their below, and often well below, average starting points. Standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, have not been consistently at expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Children start in Reception with skills and abilities that are usually well below the level typical for their age. They settle well and make steady progress, but achievement remains below the level of literacy and mathematical development expected by the time they start in Year 1. They do well in development of understanding the world and expressive arts and design.
- In Key Stage 1, progress is not fast enough for pupils to catch up in reading, writing and mathematics and their attainment by the end of Year 2 has been significantly below average for the past three years.
- In Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils currently in Year 6 who have made expected progress in writing and mathematics is above that found nationally. However, progress has not been rapid enough for most pupils to catch up from their below average starting points and attainment was below average. In writing, pupils' presentation and handwriting skills are not good enough across the school. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are aspects that have held them back. The use and understanding of mathematical language to reinforce mathematical concepts, as well as calculation and mental mathematics skills, are the weakest areas.
- The school has correctly identified the areas for development and is working to improve them. For example, there is more collaborative work in mathematics to develop mathematical vocabulary, homework includes a focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar work, and pupils at risk of falling behind receive additional support. The impact of this is evident in pupils' books with accelerated progress pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- In the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check (linking sounds and letters), the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards was below average. In 2013, the proportion was above that found nationally as a result of the school's increased focus on teaching phonics and additional individual support.
- In 2013, pupils' progress in reading improved, and attainment in reading is stronger than in writing or mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6 (in the as yet unvalidated data) was closer to the national average in reading than in the other two subjects, and above average for Level 6. This is due to the high priority given by the school to developing reading skills. Reading for enjoyment is promoted well across the school. Small-group guided reading sessions are effective in increasing pupils' comprehension skills.
- The school's records show that the progress of different groups, including boys and girls, the most able pupils and those of Gypsy Roma and Black African heritage, is generally similar. There are gaps between the achievement of boys and girls, but these are narrowing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to others overall, and sometimes better than others in reading and mathematics. Additional support is effective, particularly when pupils have individual or small-group support with teaching assistants.
- In 2013, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 who received pupil premium support was over two years behind that of their classmates. However, as with other pupils in the school, they made better progress in reading than writing or mathematics. In the current year groups, gaps in progress are narrowing considerably.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress. This is, in part, because expectations of what pupils can do have been too low and so work is not always well matched to pupils' abilities to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

- There are too few opportunities for pupils to be creative and resourceful in their learning. Work is not always demanding enough for pupils of all abilities, and especially the most able, to progress at a fast enough pace.
- The effectiveness of marking and feedback to pupils about how they can improve their work is not at the same level in all classes. There are some good examples in Years 5 and 6, where pupils also have good opportunities to reflect on their own progress and check for themselves how well they are doing, but this is inconsistent across the school.
- There are very positive relationships between teachers and pupils and, as a result, most pupils want to do well and work hard. However, teachers do not always make the most of pupils' good behaviour and attitudes by giving pupils opportunities to be creative, resourceful and independent in their learning, this limits their progress.
- A strength of teaching throughout the school is the attention teachers give to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities to share their ideas and thoughts with each other; this helps pupils to extend their thinking and learning. They listen to each other well and value others' opinions and views.
- When teaching does make sufficient demands on pupils they respond well. For example, pupils in Year 5 worked hard at improving their writing through using descriptive language. Teaching ensured that pupils were engaged and motivated, especially through inspiring use of the interactive whiteboard. Expectations were high and pupils made good progress, evident in their good quality writing.
- Pupils in Year 6 showed great determination and enthusiasm and made good progress in creating frequency charts in mathematics because of effective, challenging teaching with well planned activities, high expectations and tight deadlines.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly into the routines of the school day and are encouraged to develop independence. In an improvement since the last inspection, adults in Reception work effectively to develop children's communication skills by talking to children and asking probing questions to extend their learning.
- Teaching assistants and support staff are particularly effective in providing support to the least able pupils, those with disabilities, special educational needs and those who need additional catch-up support. For example, daily reading and writing sessions for pupils who did not reach the required level in the phonic check in Year 1 have resulted in faster gains in learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good. Pupils behave equally well in class lessons and when working with teaching assistants or other adults outside of class lessons.
- Pupils are friendly and happy to share their views about school and their work. They work well together, are keen to learn and have good attitudes to learning. They are polite and helpful.
- There are clear systems for managing behaviour, which are understood by everyone. Teachers ensure that those who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour do not disrupt the learning of others. Pupils with specific behavioural needs are supported well with good use of the quiet Rainbow Room. School records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour have reduced over time.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because where lessons do not fully engage or motivate pupils they can become inattentive and distracted. Sometimes pupils need too many reminders from adults about their conduct.
- Pupils say they are happy and feel safe in school and that they are not aware of any bullying. They understand that a few pupils find it harder than others to behave well at all times but have sensible, mature attitudes and trust in teachers to 'sort things out'. Discussions with pupils show that they are aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. They have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe, including a good knowledge of e-safety.
- The school has successfully improved pupils' attendance to the national average. Breakfast club

provides pupils with a good start to the day for those who attend and helps to promote regular attendance and punctuality.

- Most of the parents who responded to the online survey feel that their children are happy, well looked after, feel safe at school and are well behaved. Inspection findings support these views.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because there has not been a sustained trend of rapidly improving achievement over time, particularly in Key Stage 1. Senior leaders including the governing body, share the ambition and drive to forge improvements. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The quality of teaching is now checked regularly and, where weaknesses are identified, support is given and improvement expected. There are too few opportunities, however, for best practice to be shared within the school.
- Improved systems to track the progress of different groups and individuals give senior leaders information to use to target resources and support to help pupils, such as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The learning mentor and family worker make a considerable contribution to helping remove barriers to learning for those pupils who may be vulnerable and providing support for families.
- The senior leadership team is well established and provides skills and expertise in their particular areas of responsibility as well as making a growing contribution to school improvement.
- Many of the issues for improvement in the previous inspection report have been successfully tackled, notably opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support learning, improved data analysis and improved provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As well as the improving progress that pupils are now making, this demonstrates the capacity to make further improvements. However, the pace of improvements has not been as rapid as the school would have wished, in part due to staff changes but also because there have not been tight enough deadlines for leaders to check on the impact of actions taken.
- The school promotes equal opportunities, ensuring all pupils have access to the full range of subjects and activities and learn without fear of discrimination.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. It is embedded in the subjects taught and in the ethos of the school. The school promotes its values as a church school and fosters pupils' understanding and respect for different cultures and faiths.
- The curriculum is broad and enhanced by a range of enrichment activities that have a good take up by pupils. Nevertheless, the school has correctly identified that future curriculum planning needs to ensure that there are more opportunities for imaginative, inspiring and motivating teaching and learning. Pupils' personal, social and health education has a strong focus and underpins the importance the school places on promoting pupils' well-being and self-esteem. The introduction of the Forest School has had a positive impact on learning.
- The school gives high priority to a range of sporting activities, including a lunchtime running club. It is making good use of the extra funding for sports and physical education to benefit pupils' health and well-being. Funding is used to employ specialist coaches, participation in competitive sports with other schools, and professional development for teachers designed to sustain the benefit to pupils in the long term. Plans are in place to monitor the impact of initiatives.
- Parents who responded to Parent View are mostly positive about all aspects of the school's work. This view is mirrored by the school's own survey and confirmed by parents inspectors spoke to.
- The school works well with the local authority, which has provided support particularly in raising achievement and improving behaviour and attendance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body, under the new Chair, has reviewed the impact of its leadership and management and assessed how well it holds the school to account. As a result, governors have a clear awareness of what they need to do and plans are in place to improve further the effectiveness of their work. The range of skills and expertise of the governing body has

increased. Governors understand how well the school is doing compared to schools nationally and are committed to improvements. The governing body is fully involved in strategic decision-making including spending decisions. For example, it has approved funding for additional reading support, retention of key staff and has a good knowledge of how the school uses the pupil premium and sports funding. Governors keep track of the difference this makes for pupils, for example by monitoring whether gaps are closing between the achievement of boys and girls. They have instigated changes in the senior leadership team, for example by including the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, which has had a positive impact in outcomes for children in Reception. The governing body has a clear overview of teaching in the school and the links between the quality of teaching and pay and promotion. It ensures statutory duties are met, 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	101647
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	425532

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	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Blyth
Headteacher	Wendy Macallister
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 February 2012
Telephone number	01689 821993
Fax number	01689 825835
Email address	headteacher@st-paulscray.bromley.sch.uk

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