

St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Deanwood Drive, Rainham, Kent, ME8 9NP

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children are given good learning opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are consistently higher than in most other schools.
- Most teaching is at least good and some is outstanding across the school. Pupils learn well during most lessons because they are active in their own learning and their lessons are well related to real life scenarios.
- Pupils are keen to learn, respectful and considerate of others. Their behaviour is good. The school's inclusive ethos and caring teachers ensure that pupils feel safe.
- Leadership is good because the decisive action of the headteacher, other leaders and governors has enhanced the quality of teaching and ensured pupils' high results.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in reading in Key Stage 2 is slower than their progress in writing and mathematics.
- Some teaching does not challenge pupils to achieve as highly as they could. Some lessons do not contain the opportunities for active learning or effective use of real life scenarios that are seen in the best lessons. This slows pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw teaching in every class. They observed two assemblies, 11 lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, three members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. They heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's use of sports premium and pupil premium funding, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning and the quality of teaching are checked.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through taking note of the 62 responses to the online Parent View survey and through a telephone discussion with one parent.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 17 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Vant

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. A large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is much lower than the national average. This extra money is provided for children in local authority care, children with a parent or carer in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals. There are very few pupils with a parent or carer in the armed forces, in local authority care or eligible for free school meals currently on roll.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action or at school action plus are above average. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, whilst others have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties or other needs. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs currently on roll.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than in most other schools. This is mainly due to pupils arriving at the school other than at usual times.
- The school currently consists of seven classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a Reception class provided for them.
- There are currently three newly qualified teachers working in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching in the school by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - pupils are consistently given opportunities for active learning and application of subject skills in real life scenarios.
- Increase the rate of progress that pupils make in reading by:
 - building on improvements already made to the teaching of phonics
 - consistently ensuring that adults' questioning in guided reading lessons helps pupils to develop a deeper understanding of what they read.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are lower than expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of their learning as they move through the Reception Year and a large majority leave the Reception Year with skills in line with, or above, national expectations.
- Results of national screening in phonics (the sounds letters make) are in line with those in most other schools. This is an improvement on previous years because of the school's focus on the teaching of phonics.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are consistently above those in most other schools and continue to rise.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are also consistently above those in most other schools, including at the higher levels. Pupils' results in writing at the higher levels have risen considerably. Pupils' results in the new English, grammar, punctuation and spelling assessments are also above those in most other schools.
- Pupils are heard to read regularly. Their reading abilities and needs are checked carefully through the effectively-designed contact books that go home with pupils. Pupils demonstrate a love of reading and talk about the books they read with enthusiasm. For example, several Year 2 pupils talked joyfully about the humorous stories and poems that they liked.
- Pupils from all backgrounds and groups, including the most able and those joining from other schools, make good progress across the school, but their progress in reading is slower than in writing and mathematics. Opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of what they are reading are not always capitalised upon and this is why the achievement of pupils is not outstanding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve in line with their peers. This is because teaching meets their needs, which are carefully identified. The very few pupils eligible for pupil premium funding also attain results in line with other pupils in the school.
- Pupils generally present their work to a good standard and take pride in their achievements and the quality of their learning. Teachers' expectations of presentation are generally high, although these are not entirely established across the whole school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching across the school is at least good and some is outstanding. All inadequate teaching has been eradicated from the school. A stable team of teachers is now securely in place, following a year of considerable staff turnover.
- Higher expectations of pupils and recent improvements to teaching have developed the quality of Key Stage 1 pupils' learning in phonics this year. A large majority of teaching across all subjects also features high expectations of pupils, but this is not yet consistent across the school. This is why the quality of teaching is not outstanding.
- Most teaching is stimulating, pacy and ensures that pupils are quickly involved in active learning and given good opportunities for investigating their subjects. Teachers in these lessons engage pupils in high-quality dialogue and expect pupils to give thorough explanations of their ideas. For example, in an effective Year 5 English lesson the teacher used skilled questioning and gave pupils good opportunities to discuss the features of a character from *Treasure Island*. Pupils' understanding developed well as a result.
- The best lessons are imaginative and well related to real life scenarios which absorb pupils and promote thinking and work of high quality. For example, an outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson utilised problems based on a real-life pizza menu to develop pupils' understanding of percentage and apply their skills in addition and subtraction. As a result, pupils made very good

progress.

- The small amount of weaker lessons from the less experienced teachers suffer from a lack of pace and pupils' active learning is sometimes delayed. Pupils in these lessons are not always challenged sufficiently. Adults' questioning in guided reading lessons does not always help pupils to develop a better understanding of what they read. These are other reasons why the quality of teaching is not outstanding.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is engaging and meets children's needs well. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are attractively presented and activities available to children are purposeful and well linked. Children learn well as a result.
- Teachers offer pupils clear advice about how to improve their work during most lessons. Written feedback given to pupils also offers such advice, although some teachers do not always check that pupils respond to the advice they are given.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support individual pupils with particular needs and groups of pupils, particularly in the large majority of lessons when teaching is strong.
- Pupils interviewed by the inspectors praised their teachers and said they helped them make good progress. One Year 5 pupil said, 'All lessons are different. You never get bored. It's fun!'
- A very large majority of parents and carers who left an opinion for the inspector thought that their children were taught well and made good progress as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to learn and face challenge with determination, especially when teaching is at its strongest. However, a few pupils can sometimes go off task and lose engagement with learning during the small number of weaker lessons when expectations of them are too low. This is why the behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- Pupils embrace the school's inclusive, kind, respectful and spiritual ethos. They regard the school as a large friendly family and say that the teachers are very caring and 'always there' for them.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground and when travelling around the school, is good. Pupils are courteous and considerate of others at all times. Very good relationships between pupils are promoted well by the school's use of a buddying system, which involves older pupils looking after younger ones, including pupils new to the school. Pupils empathise with each other well.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, both in practical situations and online. They understand why bullying is not acceptable. Pupils who talked to the inspectors said they felt safe and that there was very little unacceptable behaviour in the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is well managed by the school. Poor behaviour is rare and dealt with swiftly and effectively when it does occur.
- Attendance of all groups of pupils has become increasingly strong over time and is higher than in most other schools.
- A very large majority of parents and staff who expressed an opinion thought that behaviour in the school was well managed.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders and governors all share high aspirations for the school. This has led to consistently high results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, pupils' progress in reading does not yet match their progress in writing and mathematics, and not all teaching matches the high standard of the best. These are the reasons why leadership and management are not yet outstanding.
- Strong actions by the headteacher have led to the establishment of a stable team of teacher

staffing and ensured the eradication of all inadequate teaching from the school. Pupils' results and the quality of teaching have both improved as a result.

- Senior and subject leaders' checking of the quality of teaching and of pupils' achievement is impressive. Findings from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, and comparisons of practice across the school are evaluated together in a very systematic and thorough manner. As a result, the school's understanding of its strengths and areas for development is extremely accurate.
 - The school's development plan identifies well-judged priorities for improvement. Actions designed to improve the school are clearly identified. Targets for improvement are both ambitious and realistic.
 - Management of staff performance is thorough and demonstrates the headteacher's high expectations of her staff. Teachers are set targets relating to precise improvements in pupils' results and progress and the quality of teaching. Decisions about possible pay awards to staff are explicitly linked to consideration of teachers' performance and their success in meeting their targets. Teachers' training needs are identified and catered for well.
 - The subjects pupils learn are wide ranging, and subject leaders are preparing the school for the new National Curriculum. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for through the many opportunities pupils are offered for reflection in peaceful and tranquil settings, such as the school's chapel and holy garden, and the spiritual nature of much of the school's work. Pupils explore different religions and cultures well, as shown through the school's recent engagement in Black History Month and other work. Diversity and equality of opportunity and value are promoted well.
 - The school promotes pupils' engagement and competition in sports in order to develop their well-being and healthy lifestyles. Sports premium funding is used to give teachers further training in this area and enhance pupils' experience through the input of an external specialist.
 - Pupil premium funding is spent on effective one-to-one and small group tuition. This has contributed to the results and progress made by eligible pupils.
 - The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements.
 - The local authority provides effective light touch support for the school. It contributes training for governors and staff, including the newly qualified teachers working in the school.
 - The headteacher and school leadership team have the well-judged confidence of the school's governing body, the local authority, and a very large majority of parents and carers.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors systematically check the school's provision through regular timetabled lesson observations, meetings with the headteacher and scrutiny of information about pupils' progress and achievement. They challenge the school about pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the targets set for improvement. Governors set the headteacher well-judged targets for her performance that reflect the school's needs and priorities. They scrutinise school finances carefully, including the use and results of the sports and pupil premium funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is good.
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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

Unique reference number	118779
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	429899

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clive Mailing
Headteacher	Katharine Sexton
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2009
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