

Charlton Church of England Primary School

Barton Road, Dover, CT16 2LX

Inspection dates

24–25 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils make inadequate progress in reading and writing. This is because the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is weak and pupils do not practise their literacy skills enough in other subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress because support for them is poor. Their progress is not checked carefully enough.
- Teaching is inadequate. Work is often too easy for some pupils or too difficult for others. Teachers have too low expectations of pupils.
- Teachers' questioning is often weak and they do not use pupils' answers to probe their thinking further, nor to assess their understanding. Teachers' marking often fails to give pupils guidance about how they can improve their work.
- Both the classroom and the outside area for Reception children are drab and uninspiring.
- The school has declined in key areas, such as the quality of teaching, since the previous inspection. Leaders have not been rigorous enough in their checking of the quality of teaching or pupils' progress. There is no clear link between teachers' pay and the quality of their teaching.
- Governors have not held leaders to account for the progress of pupils.
- Behaviour and safety are inadequate because procedures to keep pupils safe are not good enough. Policies to safeguard children are not up to date. The site is not sufficiently secure with the gate into the school sometimes left open.
- When teaching is dull, pupils sometimes lose interest and distract others.

The school has the following strengths:

- The very recently appointed headteacher has improved the governors' understanding of their role and has gained the confidence of the staff.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They say they enjoy school, especially the visits and the after-school clubs.
- Parents and carers say their children are happy at school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, two jointly with the headteacher. The headteacher was observed giving feedback to a teacher.
- The headteacher and an inspector looked at pupils' work together.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, looked at pupils' books in lessons and spoke to pupils about their work. The inspectors also observed playtimes and watched an assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governor representatives and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school's improvement plan, governing body minutes, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding and data on pupils' performance.
- Inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) received during the inspection as well as 15 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Joanna Toulson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Vant

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.

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British origin.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority) is lower than the national average. There are no children of service families in the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average, while the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school offers a club before school, although no breakfast is provided.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2013.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As a matter of urgency, improve the safety of pupils by ensuring that:
 - the school site is secure
 - pupils do not have access to areas of the school which may have hazards
 - all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training which is regularly updated
 - safeguarding policies are reviewed and kept up to date.
- Improve the quality of teaching to be at least good, by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan activities which interest and excite pupils
 - have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and how hard they should work
 - use information about what pupils know and understand to plan tasks at the right level of difficulty for pupils of different abilities
 - use questioning well to make sure pupils understand what they are learning
 - mark pupils' work in a way that helps them to improve it.
- Raise achievement for all pupils in English by:
 - providing frequent opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their reading and writing in a range of subjects, avoiding an overuse of worksheets
 - developing strategies to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium so that the achievement gap with other groups closes rapidly
 - ensuring all staff have appropriate training in the teaching of phonics.
- Improve provision in the Reception class by ensuring that both the inside and outdoor areas provide for the purposeful, stimulating and effective learning of basic skills.
- Improve the leadership and management, including governance, by:

- developing systems which regularly and rigorously check the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that teachers' pay is linked to their performance
 - ensuring that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive timely, appropriate support so that they make rapid progress
 - ensuring that governors hold the leaders rigorously to account for the performance of the school.
 - An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Too many pupils make inadequate progress in reading or writing. This is the case in national tests in recent years and also for pupils currently in the school. Hence, their achievement over time is inadequate
- Results in the Year 1 phonics check are below the national average. In 2013, only half of all Year 2 pupils reached the expected standard in writing, with a lower proportion of pupils than nationally reaching the expected standard in reading. This is because early reading and writing skills, including the teaching of phonics, are not taught well enough in Reception or Key Stage 1. Pupils spend too long talking about their writing, drawing and colouring pictures and too little time writing.
- Pupils who left the school at the end of Year 6 in both 2012 and 2013 had made very slow progress in English when compared to their peers nationally. Writing tasks are often undemanding and pupils do not have enough opportunities to read or write, either in English lessons or in other subjects.
- The school successfully promotes good relationships and tackles discrimination but it is failing to promote equality of opportunity because school leaders do not check pupils' progress carefully to ensure all groups are making good progress. In particular, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make poor progress because of inadequate teaching and support. Activities are not adapted well enough to allow pupils to make good progress and the support given by teaching assistants is not checked to see if it is making a difference.
- The achievement of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium varies across year groups. In 2012, they achieved as well as their classmates in mathematics. The achievement gap in English is not closing quickly enough and in 2012, pupils supported by the pupil premium were around two and a half terms behind their peers in this subject.
- Progress in mathematics is better than in English and is similar to that of all pupils nationally. This is because of additional training for teachers, especially in the teaching of mental calculations.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is typically weak. Teachers do not use information about pupils' progress well enough to ensure that all pupils are given work at the right level of difficulty for them. Teachers do not question pupils well enough in lessons to check their understanding and sometimes misconceptions are not addressed.
- There is too little work in pupils' books and the presentation of pupils' work is often poor. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length.
- Marking does not give good guidance to pupils about what their next steps are and untidy or careless work is sometimes praised as being good. Some work is not marked at all, especially in books other than English or mathematics.
- Generally, teachers have low expectations of what pupils should achieve and how hard they should work. Teaching assistants do not always contribute enough to supporting pupils' learning. Sometimes they are not involved in the lessons and some other times, they give too much help and this hinders pupils' ability to think things out for themselves.
- The outside area for Reception children is inadequate and the lack of appealing play equipment limits the opportunities children have for stimulating play outside the classroom. The indoor classroom is untidy and uninspiring. Opportunities are lost for children to develop their skills and confidence, for example, by children distributing fruit and milk, rather than lining up to receive it from an adult.
- Pupils often use real-life situations effectively to develop their mathematical skills, for example measuring their heads to find a hat size or measuring wood to build model shelters. However,

the teaching of mathematics, while stronger than for English, is not good because pupils learn too slowly.

- There is some better teaching. Where teaching is stronger, activities are imaginative. These were seen where pupils were writing poems in Year 6 and exploring ratio in Year 5. However, these lively lessons where pupils are expected to think and work hard are the exceptions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate because there are risks to pupils' safety and school leaders fail to ensure safeguarding procedures are fully in place.
- Policies to safeguard pupils are out of date and although plans are now in place to review them, it has meant that procedures are not clearly understood by all staff, especially those new to the school. Leaders do not ensure that all staff receive appropriate training about how to keep children safe.
- The school site is not sufficiently secure. During the inspection, the main gate into the school was unlocked as were the doors into classrooms and the main school office. Appropriate safety measures were not put in place when work to cut trees was being carried out on the school grounds.
- Supervision of pupils on the playground is not always careful enough to avoid pupils playing in areas that are out of sight of the adults on duty.
- Despite these weaknesses, pupils say they feel safe in school and parents and carers agree. Pupils say there is no bullying in school. Discussions with pupils show that they understand that bullying and racism are wrong, but they have less secure understanding about cyber bullying or how to keep safe on the internet.
- The atmosphere around the school is calm and pupils get on well with each other. Pupils are polite, friendly and proud of their school. They say that the cooperative behaviour seen during the inspection is typical. Scrutiny of behavioural records confirms this is the case over time too.
- Behaviour in lessons is not good because where teaching does not engage pupils' interest, pupils lose concentration and chat, instead of getting on with their work.
- Attendance has been low but is improving, following a number of measures introduced by the new headteacher, including contacting parents or carers quickly if a child is absent from school.
- Those pupils who attend the before-school club enjoy the chance to play with their friends before lessons start.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because key aspects of the school's work are less effective than at the time of the previous inspection. The school is declining rather than improving. Leaders have been unable to arrest this decline.
- School plans for improvement are appropriate but they are not implemented effectively. They have not led to sustained and rapid progress for all pupils nor the eradication of significant weaknesses in teaching. Together with weak governance, this means that the school does not have the capacity to improve and remedy its major weaknesses.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have not been held accountable for the progress their pupils make. Decisions about how much teachers should be paid have not been based on the quality of their teaching.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching lacks rigour. Judgements are not sharply focused on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning over time. As a result, teaching has been wrongly judged as good when pupils have made slow progress in their learning. As the school is not demonstrating the capacity to develop teaching, newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- Leaders have been too slow to respond to weaknesses in pupils' writing and have not ensured

that teachers are appropriately trained to teach phonics effectively.

- The leadership of the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is inadequate and is hindering the progress of these pupils. Additional support is poorly planned and not checked to make sure that it is making a difference to the progress that pupils make.
- The opportunities that pupils have to visit art galleries, play a musical instrument such as the flute or ukulele, or to work together in lessons effectively support their personal and cultural development. Pupils appreciate the recent increase in the number of after-school clubs and particularly enjoy the chance to play sport and keep fit. However, the curriculum fails to interest or excite some pupils and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their reading and writing skills in all subjects.
- Staff and governors told inspectors that there is a renewed sense of purpose since the arrival of the new headteacher. There are new systems in place to check how well pupils are doing but it is too early for these to have made a difference to the quality of pupils' learning and progress.
- The local authority has placed the school in a 'category of concern' and has given additional support to the new headteacher. However, the support provided has not prevented a decline in the school's effectiveness since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is weak. Most critically governors have not ensured that the school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding. This needs to be addressed urgently. Governors have accepted too readily the school's view of itself as good, and have not asked the right questions. Consequently, they have not had an accurate view of the quality of teaching, nor of how well the school is performing compared to others. However, the new headteacher is now ensuring that governors receive accurate information about how well pupils are doing. Governors know they need more training to help them to hold the school to account. Governors have not ensured that the performance of teachers is linked to where they are on the salary scale; nor have they evaluated the impact of the pupil premium funding. Although not yet spent, governors are determined to use the new funds to improve the sports provision for pupils.

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 118747

Local authority Kent

Inspection number 427332

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 209

Appropriate authority The governing body

Chair Sinead Coveney

Headteacher Kim Werth

Date of previous school inspection 28–29 March 2011

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