

Stone St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

Hayes Road, Greenhithe, DA9 9EF

Inspection dates 7–8 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- Pupils' attainment is higher than that found in most schools, especially at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Most pupils make good progress in all subjects.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Pupils learn well during the very large majority of lessons. This is because their teachers engage them with interesting lessons and clear explanations.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and take pride in their work. They are polite, well behaved and considerate of others. Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe and cared for in school.
- Leadership is good because the headteacher, other leaders and governors have high expectations. They have successfully improved the quality of teaching. Pupils' achievement has improved as a result.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make outstanding progress because not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Some teachers do not tell pupils what they need to do to learn effectively. As a result, pupils do not always produce the highest quality work during their lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw teaching in every class. They observed two collective worships, 21 lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. Fifteen lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteachers.
- Discussions were held with pupils, three members of the governing body, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including 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 the school's future development, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is checked and tracked and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents were taken into account through taking note of the 52 responses to the online Parent View survey, and through discussions with several parents.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 45 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Elson

Additional Inspector

Diana Morgan

Additional Inspector

Peter Lacey-Hastings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is lower than the national average. This extra money in this school is provided for children known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including pupils supported through school or school action plus, are above average. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, whilst others have behaviour, emotional or social difficulties or other needs. There are two pupils with statements of special educational needs currently on roll.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are currently taught in three Reception classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to ensure that all groups of pupils make consistently rapid progress by:
 - regularly checking pupils' understanding during all lessons
 - adapting teaching as a result of these checks to make sure that pupils' learning is secure.
- Ensure that all teachers give clear messages about what pupils need to do to learn well and produce the highest quality of work during their lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils make good progress in all subjects and achieve well. They are on track to reach above average attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills typical for their age. They make good progress and are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- The school's results of national screening in phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) are higher than those seen in most other schools.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 is above average. In recent years, more pupils have reached the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics than in most schools. However, not as many pupils have been reaching the higher levels as seen nationally. Pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are on track to attain better than average results in all subjects at the higher levels this academic year. This is because of improved teaching and a higher level of challenge for the most able pupils.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than those seen in most schools. Pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are on track to attain higher results than pupils in previous years.
- Although all groups of pupils make good progress, there are still inconsistencies in the progress they make. Some do not make as rapid progress as the large majority.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress from their individual starting points. This is because the school identifies their needs carefully and gives them the support that they need.
- The most able pupils make good progress across the school. This is because of an increased level of challenge since the previous inspection.
- The gap in progress between pupils eligible for additional funding and other pupils is narrowing. There is a gap in performance of approximately six months at the end of Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics. This represents a significant improvement over the previous year. Pupils eligible for additional funding make good progress across the school
- A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion expressed positive views about their children's progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good, and some is outstanding. Teaching enables pupils to make good progress and achieve increasingly high standards in all subjects. Teachers know their subjects well and use this knowledge to plan and deliver interesting lessons that engage and excite pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants explain their subjects clearly and engage pupils in thoughtful and helpful dialogue. Pupils learn well during lessons as a result.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and pupils have good working relationships and clearly respect each other. Pupils feel confident to offer their ideas and suggestions and know that these will be responded to positively.
- The level of challenge given to pupils, including the most able, has improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 1. There is now a high level of challenge across the school. Pupils' attainment is rising throughout the school as a result.
- Many teachers regularly monitor pupils' understanding during their lessons and adjust their teaching to ensure that pupils' learning is secure. However, there are times when teachers do not check that pupils' learning is sufficiently secure to ensure that they make consistently good progress.
- Teachers' marking is clear and helpful. It gives pupils clear guidance how to progress further. However, pupils are not always told what they need to do in order to learn effectively or produce

the highest quality work.

- Teaching assistants are capable and well deployed. They are used well to support the learning of groups of pupils and individuals, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that children have a good start to their education. The attractively presented classrooms and resources are used well to support children's learning. Teaching is purposeful and results in good learning.
- A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion thought that their children were taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and take pride in their work. Pupils behave well in lessons as well as in the playground and during lunchtime. They move around the school sensibly and considerately. They follow adults' instructions quickly and without fussing. Pupils are polite and considerate of others.
- The school's ethos as a 'rights respecting' school is clearly understood by pupils. They treat each other and adults with respect and value each other's ideas and contributions.
- The school promotes equal opportunities well and does not condone any form of discrimination. Strong messages on display throughout the school, and assemblies, clearly promote the school's values.
- The school's management of behaviour is good. It makes effective and consistent use of a system of rewards and sanctions, and pupils know what is expected of them.
- A few parents communicated some concerns to the inspectors about behaviour in the school. However, school records show that there have been very few incidents of poor behaviour or bullying, and that behaviour has improved over time.
- Pupils said that they felt that there was very little poor behaviour in the school. They were confident that they would know what to do if they had a problem or concern.
- Attendance has improved over time and is above average. The attendance of pupils eligible for additional funding has also improved. This is because the school closely monitors attendance and has worked successfully with parents and families to improve it. Punctuality is also good, and has improved through initiatives such as the school's breakfast club.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations. This includes when they are online and when using mobile phones and other communication devices. The school puts a high importance on teaching about e-safety. Pupils who talked to the inspectors said that they felt safe and understood how to keep themselves safe.
- The school teaches pupils why bullying is to be avoided. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe from bullying in different situations, including when online. Pupils who talked to the inspectors felt that bullying was very rare.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leadership team demonstrate a strong drive for improvement. They clearly communicate their high expectations to staff and pupils alike. This has resulted in substantial improvements to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The school's self-evaluation is thorough, analytical and detailed, as is the school's improvement plan. Senior leaders are clear about how they will measure the success of actions designed to improve the school further.

- Performance management arrangements are strong. Teachers are properly held to account for their pupils' progress and the quality of their teaching, both of which have improved. Weak performance is not accepted, and good performance is rewarded properly. Senior leaders ensure that staff are given training and other support in order to help them develop and improve.
- Subject leaders help ensure that teaching in their subjects is of a high standard. They carefully check the progress that pupils make in their subjects and prepare action plans for improvement. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader monitors children's progress well. She ensures that children are taught purposefully and effectively. Children learn and progress well as a result.
- The school teaches a broad range of subjects that pupils find stimulating. Recent work to engage boys in particular has resulted in them making better progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school has a strong spiritual ethos that promotes pupils' good attitudes towards learning and helps them develop important values.
- Sports premium funding is spent effectively on enhancing pupils' engagement in sports. It has also been used to develop teachers' knowledge and skills.
- Additional funding is spent on effective use of teachers and teaching assistants to provide extra and carefully targeted support in English and mathematics for eligible pupils. These measures have contributed to their good progress.
- 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 has offered appropriate light-touch support to the school. It has given training to teachers and governors.
- A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion considered the school to be well led.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body actively supports the headteacher's high expectations of staff, behaviour and learning. Governors have recently reorganised the way they work and, as a result, hold the school to account more deeply and efficiently than before. They have a good understanding of information about pupils' achievement and use this to challenge the school appropriately. Governors monitor the quality of teaching through focussed and organised visits to the school. They check that good teachers are rewarded properly, and that underperformance is dealt with promptly. They check on the use of the money given through the pupil premium carefully and review regularly the difference this is making to the achievement of this group of 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	118596
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	442462

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	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alaric Bonthron
Headteacher	Susan Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 January 2013
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