

# St Richard's Catholic Primary School

Castle Avenue, Dover, Kent, CT16 1EZ

**Inspection dates** 20–21 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Overall, teaching is good. Pupils learn well during a large majority of lessons because they engage successfully with what they are taught and the topics they study excite them.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved since the previous inspection and is higher than average. Pupils' results in writing are particularly good.
- From their low starting points, pupils make very good progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium achieve well and their test results were above the national average in 2013.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they have high expectations of their own behaviour. This contributes to the good progress they make. The pupils feel safe and the school provides them with very good support and care.
- The school is warm and welcoming and staff are proud to be part of it. They recognise that they are accountable for pupils' achievement and they make the most of the good opportunities for training.
- The leadership of the school is good because the high expectations of the headteacher, other leaders and governors have ensured that standards of education have improved.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The progress made by a few of the most able pupils in mathematics is not yet as good as it is in reading and writing.
- Lessons do not always sufficiently challenge the most able pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils do not regularly have opportunities in lessons to act upon the advice given in their teachers' marking and do not always fully understand how to improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 20 full or part lessons and observed pupils' behaviour in the playground. Five observations were made jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspection team talked with pupils and listened to them read. They examined work in pupils' exercise books in a range of subjects and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspection team held meetings with senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including plans for its future development, its arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes from governing body meetings, records of how the quality of teaching is checked and records of how pupils' progress is monitored.
- The views of parents and carers expressed in the 20 responses to the online Parent View survey and in discussions on the playground were taken into account.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at 27 returned questionnaires and through discussions with several members of staff.

## Inspection team

Gianni Bianchi, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbera Breed

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average size primary school.
- The school was part of a federation with the local secondary school until February 2013, when it de-federated.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds who speak English as an additional language are represented in very high numbers.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and supported by school action is below average. The number supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with that found nationally.
- A significant number of pupils join the school at times other than in Reception.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There are seven classes: one class in each year group from Reception to Year 6.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement so that both are outstanding by ensuring that:
  - pupils achieve as well in mathematics as they do in reading and writing
  - teachers routinely give time in lessons for pupils to act upon the advice given in their marking
  - teachers consistently challenge pupils and promptly move them on to more challenging tasks when they have grasped a concept or skill.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception classes with levels of skill and knowledge much lower than those typically expected for their age, especially in reading and writing. Good teaching ensures that they make good progress and they enter Year 1 with levels much closer to those expected.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. Their results have improved since the last inspection; in the 2013 national tests, pupils attained levels that were above average overall and well above average in writing. Pupils make very good progress in reading and writing despite the unusually high mobility within the school. This means that they are well prepared for secondary education.
- Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. However, occasionally in mathematics lessons teachers miss chances to stretch the most able pupils and move them on to more challenging tasks quickly enough. As a result a few pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in mathematics which is why their achievement overall is not outstanding.
- The school develops pupils' reading well and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has been effective in ensuring that Year 1 pupils have exceeded nationally expected levels in the annual phonics screening check for the past two years. Pupils enjoy reading, and pupils who read to the inspector were fluent and expressive and demonstrated a good understanding.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. In the 2013 national tests, they reached higher standards in mathematics and similar standards in English when compared with other pupils in the school. The extra funding is used effectively to support small groups and individual pupils. Current school data suggest that these pupils continue to make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress because of the early identification of their specific needs and subsequent, good quality planned support. Resources are used well to support these pupils, and their progress is regularly checked to ensure that they are achieving well.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. This is because of the excellent support they receive. For example, bilingual pupils act as young interpreters to help similar pupils with their language development and a specialist teacher works with families to improve their spoken English.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved and is now consistently good. Teachers are confident about their teaching and have high expectations of all pupils. The improved quality of teaching since the previous inspection is the main reason for the improved results at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The majority of lessons are interesting and pupils enjoy them. This was reflected by one pupil who said, 'It makes me excited when I find the answer.'
- Teaching assistants give effective support and guidance and work closely with teachers. As a result, pupils gain considerable confidence in their ability as they move through the school.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to test out pupils' understanding and to encourage them to think more deeply about what they are doing. In an effective writing lesson, where the pupils were using drama to help them visualise a battle scene, the teacher quickly picked up and attended to pupils' confusion. The teacher ensured that pupils used the correct language to describe how they were feeling. This meant that they could successfully get on with the next task and make good progress.
- When set more difficult work, pupils do as well as they can. In an extremely effective mathematics lesson where pupils were learning to solve time problems, the most able pupils were promptly moved on to a more challenging task and, as a result, made excellent progress. However, this good practice is not evident throughout the school.
- In the Reception class, children of all backgrounds and abilities happily participate in a wide range of activities because they feel valued and secure. As a result, children rapidly develop into

confident learners.

- The work in pupils' books shows their good progress over time. They are given a wide range of opportunities to read, write and apply their mathematical skills in many subjects such as science and religious education.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and give them guidance about how they can improve. However, pupils are not routinely given opportunities to act upon the teachers' marking and do not always fully understand how to improve their work.
- The majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion considered that the teaching is good.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have high expectations of their own behaviour and this contributes to the good progress they make.
- The school has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Pupils are courteous and considerate to each other. Relationships between pupils and adults and among pupils themselves are very good. Pupils listen to each other and to staff very well.
- The school operates a highly effective behaviour management system. However, the behaviour of pupils is not outstanding because in lessons where pupils are not sufficiently challenged they begin to chat and become less interested and their progress slows.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and they feel very safe at school. In lessons, pupils confidently offer ideas and share their learning with each other in an atmosphere free from discrimination and without fear of making a mistake.
- The pupils understand the different forms of bullying and know how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare and if it occurs they are confident that their teachers will intervene appropriately.
- A large majority of parents and carers agreed that behaviour in the school is good and that their children are safe, happy and very well looked after.
- Attendance has improved over time and pupils enjoy coming to school.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The clear vision and leadership of the headteacher have been pivotal in leading the school to improve since the last inspection. The assistant headteacher and other senior leaders have played strong parts in this process.
- Development priorities have been the correct ones and have been pursued with rigour, resulting in clear improvements in standards and teaching. This demonstrates a secure capacity for further improvement.
- The school's leaders, including middle leaders, keep a close eye on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning by checking pupils' work, walking around the school gauging how well pupils are learning and observing lessons. This gives them a clear picture of the quality of teaching from which appropriate staff training can be carefully planned. They know that there are still some weaknesses in teaching which must be attended to.
- Regular checks on pupils' progress by class teachers prepare them well for the termly meetings where they discuss with senior leaders the progress of their pupils. From these meetings, carefully planned support is implemented to enable pupils at risk of not doing so well to catch up.
- Pupils study a good range of subjects which they find interesting and stimulating. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through exciting and vibrant topics. These are enriched with additional activities such as Glee Club, trips to local and national museums and a residential trip to France. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in musical, sporting and artistic events, for example the Dover Lantern Festival.

- Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities; for example, Year 6 pupils are very proud to be buddies for the younger pupils.
- The new primary school sports funding is used predominantly to employ a specialist teacher who leads staff development and promotes pupils' active engagement in sports. Pupils' participation in physical activity has increased and leaders are beginning to see an improvement in the self-esteem of some pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- The local authority provides effective support to improve teaching and pupils' achievement and this has been appreciated by the school. The school benefits from sharing expertise with surrounding local schools.
- All statutory safeguarding procedures are fully met.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are active in the life of the school, offer effective challenge, and have had a direct impact on the school's improvement since the last inspection. They understand development priorities and are well informed of the school's performance and how it compares to other schools'. They have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching and set the headteacher challenging targets that focus directly on school improvement. Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources, including the use of additional government funding, and understand the links between salary progression and teachers' performance.

## 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>	118771
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	442463

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	186
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr A Rogers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jill Chapman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 September 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01304 201118
<b>Fax number</b>	01304 201118
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