

# West Kingsdown Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Fawkham Road, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks, TN15 6JP

**Inspection dates** 16–17 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills are not good, as not enough pupils across the school achieve as well as they should.
- This is particularly true for the oldest pupils who have had a lot of ground to make up. As a result, the reading, writing and mathematics skills of Year 6 pupils remain below the national average, and are particularly low in writing.
- Teaching is not always good and there is very little that is outstanding.
- Many pupils are not self-motivated or enthusiastic learners.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics are at the early stages of developing their leadership skills.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching has improved and, as a result, pupils have made rapid progress during this year and, apart from in Year 6, standards across the school are now at or above national averages.
- The school is safe and harmonious. Pupils feel safe and their behaviour has improved significantly.
- Children in the youngest classes make good progress and are enthusiastic learners as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils eligible for additional government funding and Gypsy/Romany pupils achieve as well as their classmates.
- The clear direction and positive actions taken by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors during the past year mean that there has been rapid improvement in all aspects of school life.

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## Information about this inspection

- This was the third visit since the school was judged to require special measures.
- The inspector visited all of the classes, looked at pupils' work, observed nine lessons, attended an assembly, talked with pupils and listened to several pupils read. Three of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders, two governors and a representative from the local authority. A telephone discussion was held with a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector scrutinised documents such as the school's self-evaluation, improvement plan, records of pupils' attainment and progress, checks on the quality of teaching, records of local authority and governors' meetings and visits, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding information.
- The inspector took account of the 20 responses to the online Parent View survey and internal questionnaires carried out recently with parents, pupils and staff.

## Inspection team

Sheena MacDonald, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is just below average. The large majority of pupils are White British and the next largest group is of Roma/Gypsy heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is just below 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 government funding, known as the pupil premium, is below average. In this school, the funding supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or children who are looked after.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. This is likely to change next year as the current Year 5 class already meets the standards.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is securely good or better by ensuring teachers:
  - find out more quickly what pupils already know, and adapt activities to extend their learning and provide more challenge, particularly for the most-able pupils.
- Raise standards, particularly in writing, and increase the proportion of pupils who achieve at the higher levels in all subjects by:
  - giving pupils more time to work at length and in depth.
- Improve pupils' attitudes to learning by:
  - planning activities which encourage their enthusiasm for learning, self-motivation and persistence.
- Develop the skills, knowledge and influence of all subject leaders so that they are fully involved in the successful introduction of the new National Curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Although most pupils have made at least reasonable progress this year, inadequate teaching in the past means that many, particularly at Key Stage 2, have had a lot of catching up to do. The oldest pupils have really worked hard and many have made more progress during this year than previously. However, achievement requires improvement and is not good because, over time, pupils have not made the progress they should have, particularly in writing.
- Pupils' skills in reading and mathematics have increased this year and, apart from Year 6, the standards achieved are at the levels expected for their ages. In several classes this year, the most-able pupils have made good progress, but the numbers achieving at the higher levels are still too low. Where teaching is less effective, all pupils are given the same activity to complete. Sometimes, the work is not set at the right level. This means that the work is often too hard for some, with the most-able pupils being unable to tackle more challenging activities.
- Writing is weaker than other subjects because pupils' skills have been exceptionally low in the past. The school has taken steps to improve the situation and there are displays of interesting, well-presented writing from all ages around the school. Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 5 have made particularly good progress this year. Not only has the content improved but also handwriting and presentation.
- Pupils are confident in using their mathematics knowledge to tackle problems. They enjoy this approach and this was evident in the purposeful way that Year 6 pupils set about solving an inheritance puzzle. This has been as a result of a focus to improve this aspect of learning in mathematics.
- Children in Reception and Year 1 make good progress. They are enthusiastic learners who quickly become absorbed in their activities. The school is carrying out the phonic (the sounds letters make) screening check with Year 1 pupils and early indications are that there will be a significant rise in the number achieving the expected standard.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and different groups of learners, make the same progress as their peers, as a result of good support in class.
- The small numbers of pupils from other groups such as Gypsy/Romany and those supported by additional government funding make as good, and sometimes better, progress than the other pupils. This means that there are few gaps between the attainment of different groups.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because over time it has not been good enough, particularly at Key Stage 2, for pupils to make up all of the lost ground.
- Nevertheless, pupils are now making faster progress and building good skills. Also, there are some glimmers of outstanding practice but very little that is consistently outstanding.
- Teachers and assistants do not always give pupils sufficient time to produce longer, more in-depth, pieces of work and, as a result, pupils' books have many short, sometimes incomplete, pieces of work.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative and find things out for themselves. Occasionally, teachers do not find out quickly what the pupils already know and use that information to adapt the rest of the lesson to better match their needs or to introduce more challenge earlier. As a result, the pupils are not developing enthusiasm, persistence or self-motivation.
- Nonetheless, all teachers are using, and being supported by, the systems introduced for planning, marking and checking pupils' work. Their marking is helpful and they give pupils time to respond and to improve their work. All teachers try to pitch their lessons to match differing

abilities.

- The quality of teaching in Reception is good and this, linked to well-planned, stimulating learning opportunities, means that these children are excited about learning and keen to show off their work. During the inspection, children took advantage of opportunities for writing, map-making and trail-setting. One child, using his own initiative, had opened a Shark Shop and his excitement about this was palpable.
- Teachers try to engage pupils' interest and build on their previous learning. For example, teachers use learning in other subjects such as history, or visits, to stimulate writing. A good example was seen in a Year 5 science class, where pupils' interest was captured through well-chosen film clips of specialist plants. They were all thoroughly absorbed and there was a collective gasp when the Venus Flytrap snapped shut on its victim. Following this, they were keen to discuss their existing knowledge and to find out more.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** require improvement

- Behaviour requires improvement and is not good because many pupils are not always ready and eager to learn. This is partly because they have too few opportunities to use their initiative or learn in depth about subjects which really interest them. They tend to still need reminders to keep on task and complete work to a high standard. The recent pupil questionnaire showed that pupils are very positive about all aspects of school. However, one of the highest negative responses was about whether they enjoyed their learning.
- Pupils respond very well to adults both in lessons and at lunchtime. They are polite and very friendly. Their conduct is good in lessons, corridors and in large group events such as assemblies. They are interested in other people and keen to make sure that everyone is safe and happy.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All of the parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire agree, and say that their children are safe, well looked after and happy in school. As a result, pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe in different situations. For example, they know about the importance of e-safety and speaking up if something is troubling them. The most positive response from the pupils' questionnaire shows that they are very confident that adults will help them if they are worried. There is very little bullying, and when it does happen, it is dealt with very well.
- Pupils take an increasing pride in the school. They know that it is improving and that part of the reason for that is down to them. The systems for managing behaviour are working well and there has been a dramatic fall in the number of incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils now come to school more regularly. Attendance has improved so that it is just below average. The number of pupils who take a lot of time off school has also reduced by half this year. Most of this group are Gypsy/Romany pupils who travel to particular cultural events during the year.

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

- The headteacher is providing strong and effective leadership. This is evident in the rapid improvements seen since the school was last inspected and confirmed by the exceptionally positive responses to the online parent survey and the recent staff questionnaire.
- The headteacher regularly 'walks the school' as well as carrying out more formal observations of teaching. She knows the strengths and weaknesses of staff and pupils. Reception children wondered why she had not been given a Star of the Week Award and said that they would nominate her. I hope they do.

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- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have built a strong team spirit throughout the school. They have raised expectations, skills, knowledge and confidence amongst the staff and their focus has never wavered from ensuring that pupils achieve as well as possible.
  - Well-thought-out systems for planning, teaching, target setting and marking are linked closely to regular and accurate checks on pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. Teachers are very familiar with exactly how well their pupils are learning and what they need to do to speed up the pace of progress. The process of setting targets for staff is closely linked to improving the outcomes for pupils.
  - The deputy headteacher provides support for individual teachers and several have made impressive improvements to their practice as a result. Training and development activities have been well targeted to meet the needs of the school and individual members of staff.
  - The school has been very willing to ask for and to act on advice. This has ensured that the support provided by the local authority has been well used. This is evident in the work of the literacy and mathematics subject leaders who are increasingly influential in the development of their subjects across the school. Working together, school leaders and the adviser have reviewed and amended the improvement plan to make sure the priorities are correct, actions happen when they should and the impact evaluated.
  - Pupils spend most of their time developing literacy and numeracy skills but they also study a broad range of subjects, and links are often made across subjects to make the learning more interesting. The school is beginning to develop the roles of all subject leaders.
  - There is a determination to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as possible. Support for pupils with special educational needs is effectively organised. The use of additional government funding is very well targeted and evaluated, and its impact can be seen in the rapid progress of this group of pupils.
  - There are opportunities for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Overall though, this is an aspect which requires improvement, especially with regard to developing pupils' sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves and the world around them.
  - The primary sports funding has been used to employ specialist coaches for games lessons. This is enhancing the participation and enjoyment of pupils but is not quite what the funding is intended for. Nevertheless, the school is currently planning to spend next year's funding so that it matches the requirements more closely, to ensure that staff are trained to deliver sports and physical education without the need for additional coaches.
  - The overwhelmingly positive responses from parents and carers show that the school has their confidence. All those who responded would recommend the school to other parents and carers.
  - Leadership and management are not outstanding because leaders have not yet secured good or better teaching so that pupils can achieve their best.
  - The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current statutory requirements.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body is streamlined and effective. Following the last inspection, the governors took steps to become more knowledgeable and efficient. They now understand achievement information very well and can spot anomalies, compare it with schools nationally, ask questions and usually understand the answers. The addition of an experienced Clerk to the Governing Body has speeded up this process.
    - They know the school very well, the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, training programmes and safeguarding arrangements, through informative reports from the headteacher at the monthly meetings and attending regular local authority progress meetings. In addition, each governor has specific responsibility for an aspect of school improvement and there are regular visits focusing on these.
    - Governors are fully involved in all strategic aspects such as financial decision making, recruitment and the setting of targets for staff. They have made a good contribution to school improvements during the past year.

## 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>

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## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130948
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	441728
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	161
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vicky Stapley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sonia Phillips
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13–14 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 853484
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