

Salmestone Primary School

College Road, Margate, Kent, CT9 4DB

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' progress is not yet rapid enough to compensate for past weaknesses in their learning, particularly for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- Pupils' abilities to apply their mathematical skills are not developed sufficiently.
- Not enough pupils spell or punctuate their written work confidently, particularly when writing in other subjects.
- Teaching is not consistently demanding the best from pupils, particularly for the most able, to help them make at least good progress.
- Pupils who are entitled to extra funding lag behind others in some year groups.
- Teaching does not cultivate pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning in Years 1 to 6. Pupils like coming to school, but are not always enthusiastic learners.
- While pupils are keen to talk to adults or visitors, they do not talk with enthusiasm about what they learn.
- Leaders and managers have not secured good teaching, pupils' good behaviour and pupils' good achievement since the academy opened.
- Governors did not initially ensure good leadership of the school after becoming an academy. Changes to how governors support leaders are not fully proven. Some staff are new to their roles so have not yet fully influenced improvements in their areas of responsibility.

The school has the following strengths

- Children have a good start to school. Their progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is often good so they are well prepared to start in Year 1.
- Progress has started to improve across the school. Pupils' attainment is moving closer to the levels expected.
- Pupils say they feel safe, such as being aware of how to use technology, web sites and social media safely.
- Changes to the way staff promote pupils' better behaviour are beginning to work. Pupils who are particularly vulnerable are cared for well to aid their learning.
- The executive headteachers are steering the school in the right direction. They have raised expectations of both staff and pupils. As a result, the pace of improvement is accelerating.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school’s work, scrutinised information on pupils’ progress and looked at work in pupils’ books. They considered information about safeguarding, monitoring of teaching and behaviour management.
- Most of the inspection was spent observing teaching. Inspectors observed teaching in 18 lessons. Inspectors also observed small groups of pupils working with an adult other than their teacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6 and talked to these children about their learning in classes.
- Meetings were held with leaders, members of school staff, members of The Kemnal Academy Trust (TKAT) and its representatives.
- Inspectors talked to a small group of pupils formally and others informally in lessons and on the playground.
- Inspectors took account of the 34 responses to the Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by a number of parents who spoke informally at the beginning of the school day. The results of 22 questionnaires completed by staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Mason

Additional Inspector

Brian Meyer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much bigger than average.
- 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 and looked after children) is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average and most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is around the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is higher than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An onsite nursery is managed by the governing body. The school runs a breakfast club each morning.
- The school converted to an academy at the beginning of September 2012, sponsored by TKAT. The former deputy headteacher was appointed as headteacher in September 2013, but left the school in Easter 2014. Two experienced executive headteachers share the leadership of the school. They took over from the start of the summer term 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in Years 1 to 6 so that it is typically good or better by:
 - helping staff to ensure that all pupils are challenged and motivated by the tasks set, particularly for the most able, to boost their learning
 - ensuring that teaching helps pupils become more confident to apply their number skills in different situations.
- Raise pupils' achievement, particularly in Years 1 to 6, so that more learn at a faster rate, ensuring that:
 - pupils' achievement over time is consistently good, to enable them to reach the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics
 - pupils develop secure accurate spelling and punctuation skills
 - pupils eligible for additional funding continue to improve their progress in all year groups.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and safety, particularly in Years 1 to 6, by
 - making sure the new systems to reward pupils' good behaviour, attitudes to learning and ensure pupils' safety are used consistently through the school.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that revised arrangements for governors to support the school and to develop their links with TKAT are fully implemented and are effective
 - supporting those staff new to their roles so they can promote quicker improvements in their areas of responsibility.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. Results were well below average in the school's first national tests in Year 6, particularly in mathematics, and also in aspects of their English work such as punctuation and grammar. Few pupils reached better than expected levels. The most able are not fully stretched in their learning. Although improving, pupils are not consistently good at applying their mathematical skills.
- Pupils' ability to write using accurate spelling and a wide vocabulary is inconsistent. A clearer focus on writing is helping boost pupils' willingness to write in English lessons but not always in other subjects. Pupils respond to questions from teachers or visitors but some do not always express themselves clearly, particularly when talking about their learning.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in their phonics (the sounds that letters and combinations of letters make) screening check last year was lower than the national average. The school increased help to boost pupils' confidence in reading unfamiliar words and this is starting to work. Older and younger pupils alike generally read accurately and older pupils like reading books by a range of authors.
- Those pupils supported through additional funding make slower progress in reading, writing and mathematics and in 2013 they were over a year behind their classmates. However, their writing and mathematical skills have improved in most, but not all, year groups. Gaps between these pupils and their classmates have reduced significantly as the school has focused more intensely on their needs.
- Pupils who need extra help with their learning, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, generally make good progress. Support within class, in small teaching or nurture groups, gives them the extra help they need.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from much lower than typically expected starting points. In both the Nursery and Reception, a wide range of activities help develop their early language, social, physical, and creative skills. In Reception, a well-read story of 'Gruffalo' helped extend children's speaking, listening and imagination.
- Pupils benefit from regular physical education activities in both school and after-school clubs to increase their activity levels. Pupils are confident users of technology, such as computers, although some say they would like to use it more often.
- The few pupils at the early stages of speaking English are supported appropriately within lessons, but like others, their progress also varies and requires improvement.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not helping pupils make faster progress to make up for past weaknesses in their achievement. This is particularly true for the most able pupils who are not always challenged to do their very best. Some pupils confirmed they would like work that is more demanding.
- Pupils eligible for extra funding benefit from more direct teaching and support, following the school's first set of national results. However, along with all pupils, they are not always encouraged to learn effectively, particularly in the way they use their mathematical skills within different problems.
- Since becoming an academy, there have been variations in the quality of teaching. There are still times when teaching only demands modest amounts of work from pupils. While some pupils take pride in presenting their work, notably in the oldest year groups, not all teaching ensures pupils present their work well.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching provides a good range of activities both indoors and outdoors. These, combined with some direct teaching of basic skills, ensure they are well

prepared for Year 1. Children know how to work and socialise together such as taking turns.

- Pupils are encouraged to write for a range of purposes, such as instructions, descriptions or lists of equipment for a shop. However, the amount of work pupils produce is relatively brief at times and not all spell words accurately or add full stops, commas, or capital letters in the right places.
- Teachers remind pupils how to behave, work with others and treat others fairly to help promote their social, moral or cultural development.
- In response to the school's first set of national results last year, changes were made in the way pupils are taught basic skills. Some changes have been more successful than others over time, so pupils' progress in some classes is still slow. The teaching of phonics has improved and this is reflected in pupils' improving reading confidence.
- Projects, such as work connected to the story of the 'Iron Man', help motivate pupils' learning. Recent initiatives to help extend pupils' writing skills are at an early stage and pupils do not always write at length or neatly within other subjects.
- The help given to those pupils who need extra special guidance or support is increasingly effective in helping them learn. They are supported effectively.
- Teaching helps provide pupils with regular and helpful advice about how to improve their work, although not all pupils readily use it.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils say they like school and have noticed there have been changes for the better recently. However, their attitudes towards learning are not consistently positive. In activities, pupils become restless and distracted when teaching does not enthuse them.
- Pupils recognise that the behaviour of some classmates is not consistently good and that this does link with differences in the teaching that takes place. New systems to reward good behaviour are starting to take effect but not all pupils are fully responding to the raised expectations set by senior leaders.
- Pupils say that any instances of bullying are relatively rare. They say the school deals quickly with it if bullying occurs. However, a very small number of parents voiced some concerns about bullying levels. Pupils enjoy attending the breakfast club and say, it 'gives us a good start to the day'.
- Pupils say they enjoy their role on the school council and spoke about how they had helped to change some simple routines in the school such as the reasons needed to attend the oasis 'time out' room. The range of responsibilities pupils have are relatively wide, although few pupils spoke about issues beyond the school that they might be concerned about or try to influence for the better.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Pupils say they feel safe and know who to turn to should they need help. They know how to avoid dangers within the school, but are not knowledgeable about how to avoid dangers beyond the school gates. Some systems to monitor pupils' behaviour and safety are more effective than those that were previously in place. Not all staff consistently use the recently revised procedures to spot and record possible problems or concerns.
- Pupils develop a good awareness of how to stay safe when using new technologies. Some spoke about how much they had enjoyed designing posters to promote safety when using computers and the Internet.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, since the academy opened, there have been insufficient improvements to help teaching, learning and pupils' achievement to become good.

- There have been a number of changes in responsibilities for staff since the academy opened. These have helped make roles clearer and to hold staff more accountable to senior leaders. In reality, however, some of these roles are new or are not due to start fully until September. This means these staff are not yet fully effective in influencing improvements.
- Although the change to an academy was slow initially to bring about improvement, there are now benefits in terms of the support the school has to help it improve.
- Parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire and those spoken to at the beginning of the school day were appreciative of some of the changes taking place. They also voiced concerns about the levels of information they receive about the changes taking place and would like to be more aware of further changes.
- The executive headteachers provide secure day-to-day leadership of the school. Soon after they started, they quickly identified weaknesses in the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and their levels of behaviour and safety. The changes are starting to take effect, particularly in ensuring that this year's results are better than last year's. The revised way the school intends to teach subjects from September is being finalised, with an appropriate emphasis on basic skills. Staff speak highly of the way they have taken tough decisions when needed, particularly when promoting better quality of teaching.
- Although many changes in leadership and management are recent, there is already sufficient evidence to demonstrate the capacity to secure further improvement. The executive headteachers both recognise the need for further changes to ensure that over time, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement rise to good levels.
- Pupils have noticed an increase in sports-based activities. They really like the increased number of sports-based clubs available. This has complemented other initiatives to develop pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles and well-being. The new primary sport funding is used appropriately to finance these developments.
- The support provided by TKAT, has been effective, particularly since the beginning of the year. A range of consultants has provided support to individual staff to help improve teaching or for them to become more confident in their areas of responsibility. They have ensured that the day-to-day leadership of the school is effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school requires improvement. After becoming an academy, governors did not ensure the leadership of the school was effective in raising the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement quickly. Following a number of reviews, prompted by TKAT, changes for the better took place quickly. This included the provision of a consultant headteacher at the beginning of the year. The roles of governors were also revised, but changes have not yet had time to take full effect. Supported by advisers from TKAT, governors are now much more aware of how the quality of teaching links with salary progression. They are also aware of how the school's performance compares to others both locally and nationally. Extra governors provided by TKAT have helped support the way governors operate both within the school and in the wider academy trust. These are still areas, however, that are not fully in place or effective. Governors ensure that day-to-day safeguarding and checks on staff appointments are completed. They ensure that the school provides equal opportunities for pupils where possible.

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	138438
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	426378
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Luckhurst
Executive Headteachers	Julie Davey, Jill Thewlis
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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