

# Cage Green Primary School

Cage Green Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN10 4PT

**Inspection dates** 2–3 July 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		Good	2
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' achievement is not yet good. The majority of pupils make expected progress, and some are making faster progress.
- The rate of progress for some groups and in some classes is not fast enough.
- Not all groups of pupils do equally well; boys do not do as well as girls. Pupils eligible for additional government funding are doing better in some year groups than others.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not always set work at the right level to challenge pupils of different abilities.
- The focus on English and mathematics means that not all subjects are taught in enough depth.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use literacy skills and mathematical knowledge in other subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to learning. They feel safe and are well looked after.
- Children in the Reception Year make a strong start to school life.
- Provision in the Phoenix Centre meets pupils' needs effectively; they have various opportunities to work in the main school according to their social and academic needs.
- Leadership continues to grow stronger at all levels. Systems for checking what works and identifying what needs to improve next are rigorous.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas that require improvement. They challenge the school's leaders effectively.
- Staff morale is high.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils’ current attainment and progress, improvement planning, the use of pupil premium and sports funding, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited 15 lessons, of which 14 were observed jointly with senior and middle leaders. They looked at pupils’ work.
- Inspectors observed break times, lunch times, and the start of the school day as well as attending an assembly.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils to talk to them about their work.
- Inspectors met senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The team analysed the 121 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke briefly with parents and carers as they brought their children to school at the start of the day.
- Inspectors analysed questionnaires completed by staff.
- Evidence from monitoring inspections in January, May and September 2013 and in January 2014 was also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Jane Wotherspoon, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

David Webster

Additional 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

- When the school was inspected in October 2012, it was deemed to require special measures. Improvements were required to pupils' progress, the quality of teaching, and to leadership and management, including governance.
- There have been significant changes in staff since the inspection in 2012, including a number at senior level. The acting headteacher who joined the school in January 2013 was appointed to the substantive headship in March 2014. The consultant headteacher who joined the school at the same time, was appointed to the substantive deputy headship post in June 2014.
- The school is larger than average and is growing steadily. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. The funding is used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs identified at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are higher than average.
- The school manages a specially resourced provision, The Phoenix Centre, for up to 30 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. This unit is currently full.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - making sure that activities are set at the right level to close the gaps between pupils and to stretch those who need more challenge
  - raising expectations of pupils' written work, including in other subjects
  - ensuring that agreed policies and practice in marking pupils' work are implemented at all times, particularly in subjects beyond English and mathematics.
- Strengthen the depth and breadth of pupils' learning in a range of subjects by:
  - implementing proposals for the new curriculum from September, and ensuring that sufficient time is given to all subjects
  - providing greater opportunities for pupils to use literacy skills and mathematical knowledge across a range of subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because some groups of pupils do not make rapid enough progress over time due to weaknesses in teaching.
- Overall attainment is rising. More and more pupils work at the levels expected of them across the school; they are catching up and the majority now make expected progress. Pupils in some year groups make rapid progress. A notable example is in Year 6, where many pupils have made huge gains in the current year as a result of stronger teaching and intensive programmes of support.
- Gaps in attainment between different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls or those eligible for the pupil premium and those who are not, are closing gradually. This narrowing of gaps is stronger in some year groups than others and generally stronger in reading and writing than in mathematics. This patchy picture is a remnant of past weaknesses and means that achievement is not yet good.
- Results of tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2013 were significantly below the national figures. The current Year 6 are on track to do much better this year, including the most able pupils who are on course to reach Level 5 or Level 6. Nonetheless, in this year group there are wide differences between the performance of boys and girls.
- Attainment in Year 2 is slightly weaker this year than last but, overall, predicted to be similar to the national picture. The results of checks on pupils' knowledge of phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they represent) in Year 1 are stronger than last year.
- Children in the Reception Year make huge strides across all areas of learning. Outcomes are strong, with a high proportion of children meeting the early learning goals at the end of the year. These pupils are well prepared for Year 1.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress that is similar to their peers. It is stronger in some year groups than others. Pupils in the Phoenix Centre are doing well, particularly the younger ones for whom appropriate interventions have been in place more consistently. All but two pupils in the centre join their peers in the main school for some part of the week.
- The school's focus on promoting a love of reading has reaped rewards with outcomes in reading generally stronger than writing and mathematics. Pupils' writing is improving in content, including the use of different features of writing and the quality of the vocabulary used. However, some younger pupils do not write quickly enough and complete only a small amount of written work. Older pupils continue to make errors in spelling and grammar. The quality of written work is inconsistent across subjects.
- Mathematics is stronger in the early years and at Key Stage 1, where a new programme of work is helping to strengthen pupils' number skills. Older pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge and understanding that affect how quickly they grasp new work.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Some variability remains in the quality of teaching. It is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress. Some improvements are relatively recent and not consistent in everyday practice.
- Teachers make regular checks on pupils' levels of work and on their progress over time to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Not all are successful in using this information to set work at the right level to challenge pupils of different abilities and to extend their learning. The most skilled teachers modify tasks while pupils are working.
- The strong focus on improving pupils' vocabulary is paying dividends in the content of their writing. Pupils learn from each other and rehearse answers to questions or practise what they will write. Subject-specific vocabulary is reflected in the displays and 'working walls' that pupils use to help them with their work.

- Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Routines are clear and relationships are positive. However, this does not always translate into high enough expectations of the pace of pupils' work.
- Teachers' marking in pupils' English and mathematics books is systematic and often guides pupils to make improvements. Not all pupils follow up these comments, however, or are given time to do so. Expectations of pupils are not as high in other subjects and such work is not well marked. Pupils do not routinely use skills from English and mathematics in other subjects.
- In the Reception Year, teachers provide a good balance between learning opportunities that children choose for themselves and those that all children are expected to try. Opportunities for mathematical development are particularly well catered for and integrated effectively into everyday activities. Children's language development and social skills are extended effectively by the many and varied role play activities.
- Staff in the centre work effectively as a team to anticipate pupils' needs and to support their learning. Clear routines provide structure and a framework for pupils' learning. Activities are purposeful and expectations are high. Careful planning between teachers in the centre and those in the main school support pupils' successful integration.

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

- Pupils' conduct and behaviour around the school is good and movement around the building is calm and orderly. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and visitors. They respond positively to the clear expectations set by staff.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is a strength. The school has absorbed pupils from other schools, who have had difficulty managing their own behaviour. Such pupils have settled well and are now working productively.
- Pupils play well together. High levels of respect, consideration and care for each other stem from the positive relationships that are fostered from an early age. An impressive feature is the way that pupils from the Phoenix Centre are helped to integrate into the life of the main school.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Even when teaching is not as strong, pupils sustain effort and concentration on their work. They understand the way that teachers mark their work and know that they can learn from their mistakes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and well cared for; they are taught how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school. Parents are confident that pupils are looked after well at school.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about different types of bullying and how to respond to any such occurrence. They are confident that instances of bullying, including name-calling, are rare. They trust that adults will listen to them and deal with any unkind situations or instances of discrimination.
- The school's records and systems for keeping an eye on pupils who might need emotional support are rigorous. Through the good work of the family liaison officer, pupils and families benefit from support from a range of agencies.
- Attendance has improved steadily and is now above the national figures. Systems for monitoring the attendance of different groups of pupils are rigorous. Staff are especially vigilant about following up pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly.

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

- The headteacher and senior leaders set high expectations of staff and pupils alike. Importantly, a growing number of middle leaders take responsibility for leading aspects of the school's work. They also contribute to the rigorous systems for checking what is working and what needs to improve. Hence, the capacity to sustain improvements is growing stronger.
- The school's improvement plan is updated continually taking account of a wide range of evidence. Regular checks on the impact of actions help to identify the next steps for the school

to take. Leaders have focused on improving the quality of teaching through a range of training for all staff and specific support and coaching for individual staff.

- Systems for analysing the information about pupils' attainment and progress are thorough. Increasingly, class teachers understand and use this information to pick up on pupils who need support or challenge to make more progress.
- All staff have targets that relate to pupils' outcomes and whole-school improvement that are used to manage their performance. Staff morale is high. There is a common sense of purpose and a strong sense that all staff are pulling together to make improvements for the benefit of the pupils.
- The management of the Phoenix Centre is good. A strong sense of teamwork underpins a consistent approach for pupils in the centre. The clear vision for how the centre works alongside the main school helps staff to share best practice.
- The school's priority on developing pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics has been at the expense of some subjects, especially in Year 6. However, much has been done in preparation to implement the new National Curriculum from September and to increase the breadth and depth of learning in other subjects.
- Opportunities to take part in a wide range of clubs, to play a musical instrument and to visit places of interest both locally and further afield support pupils' personal development. The additional sports funding is used appropriately to extend activities for pupils to increase their participation in sporting activities and also to develop staff expertise. Pupils take on responsibilities as playground leaders and school council members, which gives them a voice in decision-making.
- Parents responding to the Ofsted survey (Parent View) are positive about many aspects of the school's work. Several who spoke with inspectors mentioned improvements in the way that the school keeps them informed and follows up their queries. Others noted the increase in lunchtime and after-school activities.
- The school benefited from a high level of support and challenge from the local authority, which has been reduced over time. Collaboration with local schools has provided many opportunities for staff to see good practice. Importantly, staff from other schools now visit Cage Green to see good practice, notably in the centre and in the early years.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance has improved significantly since the inspection of 2012. Members of the governing body have undertaken much training to develop their skills and understanding of their role. Through visits to the school, they recognise where it has improved and are realistic about what more needs to be done. They know, for example, where teaching requires further improvement and what leaders are doing to improve teaching further. This knowledge contributes to their strategic vision for the school. Governors check that the actions taken by the school's leaders are having the intended impact on improving outcomes for pupils. They ask awkward and challenging questions about the performance of pupils in comparison with the national picture, including those for whom the school receives pupil premium funding. The funding is used to target support for pupils to narrow gaps, although some inconsistencies remain. The rolling programme of policy review and update ensures that statutory requirements are met, including those to safeguard pupils' well-being.

## 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>	118574
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	441616

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	416
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Antonia Balaam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Graeme Garthwaite
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4–5 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01732 354325
<b>Fax number</b>	01732 369468
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