

# St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

High Street, Carisbrook, Isle of Wight, PO30 1NR

## Inspection dates

6–7 November 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders have not clearly identified the key issues affecting the inadequate progress pupils have made, particularly in mathematics. They do not hold teachers to account for this.
- The school's self-evaluation is not accurate. Plans for improvement are not sharply focused. Middle leaders are not effective in making sure improvements happen consistently.
- Governors have too readily accepted the optimistic views of senior leaders about how well the school is performing, without challenging enough.
- The achievement of most groups of pupils is inadequate, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils attain less well than they should by the time they leave the school, particularly in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils make slower progress and attain markedly less well than other pupils in the school, particularly in mathematics.
- Teaching does not provide pupils with the work they need to learn well. Teachers expect too little of pupils and do not check in lessons how well pupils have understood. Teachers do not ensure pupils persevere with difficult tasks or complete enough work in the time available.
- Teaching assistants do not make a strong enough contribution in lessons to raising standards. They are not always clear what is expected of them.
- Marking of pupils' work does not help them to know precisely enough what they need to do to improve. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to make the necessary improvements.
- Behaviour requires improvement because pupils do not always try to produce their best work. Pupils' safety requires improvement because incidents of poor behaviour and bullying are not recorded and addressed systematically enough.
- The early years provision requires improvement. Teaching does not meet children's needs well.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' progress accelerates in Year 6; pupils often make good progress in that year group.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.
- Pupils find the topics they study interesting.
- Leadership across the federation is helping to bring about some improvement, notably in physical education.

## Information about this inspection

- This was a coordinated inspection with the other school in the federation, St Mary’s Catholic Primary School in Ryde.
- The two inspectors spent most of their time in lessons, observing pupils’ learning and looking at the work they were doing. Three of these observations were done together with the deputy headteacher and one was carried out jointly with the local authority advisor.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence provided by the school, including: records tracking the progress of pupils and groups of pupils; work in pupils’ books and folders; summaries of checks carried out by senior leaders regarding the quality of teaching; plans to tackle key issues; the school’s self-evaluation of its performance; and the views of external advisors about the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, teachers and leaders. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body and with the advisor from the local authority.
- The views of parents were considered through the 50 responses to the online survey for Ofsted, Parent View, and through informal discussions. The inspectors also took account of the 24 responses to a survey for staff at the school.
- The executive headteacher was not able to be present at the school for the whole duration of the inspection. On the second day, the local authority advisor worked with the inspection team on behalf of the school.

## Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- This school is slightly smaller than the average size for primary schools, with one class in each year group. Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is similar to the national average. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The headteacher was appointed as executive headteacher of the Federation of St Mary's and St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary Schools in September 2013. The leadership team has recently been reorganised to include an assistant headteacher at each school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These indicate the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

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

- Increase the rate and consistency of the progress made by all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
  - leaders and teachers make better use of achievement information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
  - teachers have consistently high expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving, particularly the most able
  - pupils are more motivated to complete work to a high standard which reflects their ability
  - pupils have sufficient time and encouragement to act upon the advice given in marking and other feedback so that they can improve their work.
- Improve teaching so that it is typically good across all year groups, by:
  - making sure that teachers plan work which interests and challenges all groups of pupils, including in the early years provision
  - using questioning more effectively to check how well pupils understand what they are learning, and adjust what pupils are doing, where necessary
  - ensuring that pupils are encouraged to develop greater perseverance with tasks which they find difficult
  - ensuring that classroom-based teaching assistants are clear about what is expected of them and make a consistently effective contribution to raising standards
  - ensuring that all marking is effective in helping pupils to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management across the school, by:
  - more accurately analysing the information the school already has about how well pupils are achieving and making sure that any issues this raises are acted upon in a timely manner
  - developing more sharply focused plans to tackle key issues for improvement, and checking more frequently that these plans are having the necessary impact
  - holding teachers to account more rigorously for the progress pupils make
  - making sure that all middle leaders are given the necessary training and support to contribute

effectively to school improvement

- making sure that any incidents of misbehaviour and bullying, and the actions taken, are recorded more systematically
- making sure that governors challenge the school about its performance most robustly.

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

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because weak teaching has led to pupils underachieving over time. The school has not made effective use of information about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. As a result, the headteacher's evaluation of the performance of the pupils has been too optimistic.
- Senior leaders' checks on the quality of teaching have not focused closely enough on the impact teaching has on how well pupils achieve. Feedback to teachers has been too positive. As a result teaching has not improved quickly enough. Too many teachers have not taken responsibility for increasing the rates of progress of pupils in their classes. This has not been taken into account by leaders and governors when reviewing the levels of teachers' pay.
- Middle leaders have not had enough impact in bringing about improvement. These leaders currently in post are new to their roles and have had too little support and training to be as effective. While leaders have begun to develop new plans to bring about improvements, these are not sharply focused and lack a sense of urgency.
- Leaders have not checked closely enough that the support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is making the rapid difference that is needed. The federation provided useful expertise to support those with speech and language difficulties. This is helping them to overcome these issues. However, support for pupils with other needs is not as effective.
- Senior leaders have not checked that the use of additional funding has been effective in helping disadvantaged pupils to close the achievement gap with other pupils quickly enough. Consequently, the achievement gap has increased, highlighting weaknesses in the school's work to promote equality of opportunity.
- While the federation has provided helpful opportunities to share expertise, for example in developing the Early Years Foundation Stage, this has not been well focused on the needs of the whole school. The federation has enabled the school to put in place helpful systems to record and evaluate information about the progress pupils are making. However, leaders have not accurately interpreted the information available to them.
- The school has worked to adapt the curriculum to reflect the new national requirements. However, it is not yet sufficiently embedded to ensure pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and communication develop as quickly as they should. The themes around which teachers plan the work for pupils are interesting and give them suitable opportunities to find out about the wider world and life in modern Britain. Frequent opportunities for reflection contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a strength of the school.
- The school makes prudent use of the additional funding to develop physical education and promote healthy lifestyles for pupils. It is used to provide expert coaching across the federation and supports teachers by improving their confidence in planning and delivering high-quality physical education. It has also provided helpful resources to expand the activities already available.
- The local authority has previously endorsed the views of senior leaders about the performance of the school, contributing to an inaccurate comparison of its performance when set against schools nationally.
- Senior leaders and governors have made sure that statutory requirements are in place, particularly those that ensure pupils are kept safe. In particular, they ensure that the adults working with pupils are safe to do so. They check that teachers are well trained and understand their responsibilities in responding to any safeguarding concerns raised. However, the systems to keep track of any incidents of poor behaviour are not well organised or used to identify wider concerns or issues.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have too readily accepted the optimistic views of the headteacher. They have not challenged leaders with sufficient rigour to provide explanations where they have had concerns about the performance information they have received. Moreover, they have not followed up these concerns where there has been a contrast with the school's overgenerous assessment of the quality of teaching. Governors have not checked whether performance management is used effectively to help teachers improve, or the extent to which best practice is encouraged through the awarding of incentives in teachers' pay.
  - Governors have made sure that policies and procedures are updated to reflect recent changes in legislation, particularly with regard to keeping pupils safe.
  - Governors check that the school carefully plans how they spend the finances available. However, they

have not been rigorous in checking that these plans improve pupils' achievement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because pupils are not always committed to producing the best quality of work they are capable of. Too often, they are content with doing only the minimum of what they are asked to do, because teachers do not expect more than this.
- Adults who work with specific pupils, particularly those with challenging behaviour, have a good grasp of the needs of these particular pupils. These adults often ensure that behaviour which might otherwise disrupt learning is well managed.
- Pupils understand the school's policy for behaving responsibly, which works well. Around the school, pupils are polite and pleasant, and they help to keep the school tidy.
- Pupils in Year 6 thrive on the increased level of challenge and expectation. They recognise that they could be doing even better if they had worked harder earlier. However, they have very positive attitudes to their learning and work hard to achieve the best they can.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has also reduced because the school have increasingly emphasised the importance of being at school regularly.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement because incidents of poor behaviour are not recorded systematically enough.
- Younger pupils feel that there is some bullying or unkind language and they are not always confident that this will stop quickly when they tell an adult. Older pupils say that bullying is very rare, and that they are confident it would be tackled quickly when adults become aware of it. However, they too acknowledge that, occasionally, there is some unpleasant name-calling. The school has provided pupils with useful training about the different forms of bullying and what they can do to help make sure it does not happen.
- Pupils are aware of how they can help keep themselves safe. For example, they know what they should and should not do when using the internet.
- Almost all parents who responded to the online survey were of the view that their children feel safe at the school, and that behaviour is good. However, inspection evidence confirms that both behaviour and safety require improvement.

## The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate because it does not sufficiently challenge pupils or enable them to achieve well enough. Too often pupils are given work that is not hard enough. They either finish it quickly, or take too long on tasks which do not contribute well to their learning.
- Teachers do not expect enough of pupils. They allow pupils to spend too much time on tasks which are not beneficial to their learning. They are not given enough encouragement to develop the resolve needed to keep going when work is hard for them.
- Too often the questions teachers ask require little thought or response, and teachers frequently provide the answers themselves. When pupils find the work they are set too easy, teachers do not always increase their expectations and set harder work. At other times, teachers do not routinely pick up when pupils have not understood what they are supposed to be doing.
- The most able pupils too often have to wait for others to catch up when they have finished their work. Even when teachers have prepared additional, harder work for these pupils, they still spend too much time finishing the less demanding work. This limits the progress they make, particularly in writing.
- The school's effective, agreed approach to marking, which aims to provide pupils with encouragement and something to work on, is not used consistently by teachers. The comments teachers make in pupils' work books focus too much on what pupils can do, rather than what they should do to improve. Teachers do not consistently give pupils the time and encouragement to make improvements. Consequently, pupils do not learn from this, and mistakes are allowed to continue for too long.
- The school's new and well-conceived approach to teaching reading and writing is not yet being used well by all teachers. Consequently, this strategy has been slow to make a difference to pupils' learning. There are plans to review the approaches to teaching mathematics, but these have not yet been implemented.

- Classroom-based teaching assistants are not used well to support learning. They have too little information about the needs of the pupils they are working with and are unclear what pupils might be expected to achieve.
- Teaching in Year 6 is much stronger than in the rest of the school. Pupils acknowledge that they are expected to work much harder in Year 6. Higher expectations mean that these pupils are proficient in acting upon the feedback they are given.
- Recent developments across the federation are giving teachers more opportunities to observe colleagues and exchange ideas. However, the impact of this is not yet evident in the quality of teaching.

### **The achievement of pupils**

### **is inadequate**

- Too many pupils make inadequate progress in reading, writing and particularly in mathematics. For example, pupils currently in Year 6 are now having to try to catch up by about six to nine months because of the slow progress made earlier in Key Stage 2. The progress of boys is weaker than that of girls. Year 6 boys are about six months behind the girls in writing.
- During Key Stages 1 and 2, the work in the pupils' folders and books, and the school's own records show that pupils' make slow progress. The proportion of pupils making expected progress by the end of Year 6 has been broadly in line with that found nationally. However, this relies too much on them making accelerated progress in Year 6. Fewer pupils than average typically make better-than-expected progress.
- The progress of pupils with additional needs is inadequate because their needs are not always met, particularly in lessons where they do not have adult support. When these pupils begin to fall behind this is not identified quickly enough, and their progress is allowed to decline for too long.
- The gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils, and all pupils nationally, have widened over the past three years. In 2012, disadvantaged pupils performed better than other pupils in the school at the end of Year 6. In 2013, they were in line with other pupils. In 2014, they were about a year behind other pupils nationally in mathematics and writing, and about six months behind in reading. Across other year groups, their progress is also too often slower than other pupils. Therefore the gap widens as they move through the school.
- The most able pupils do not have enough opportunities to work at the highest levels of which they are capable. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who reach the highest standards is lower than average, particularly in mathematics and writing. Their progress in writing is particularly weak.
- Pupils who are particularly vulnerable because of external circumstances, often make good progress, both in their learning and in their personal development. This is due to the good support provided within the school, and effective partnerships that have been developed with outside agencies.
- Pupils with speech and language difficulties make better progress because the federation has enabled the school to provide additional expert support.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- Early years provision requires improvement. The knowledge and skills of children vary widely when they join the school in Reception. Overall, their knowledge and skills are less well developed than is typical for their age.
- Performance information from recent years shows that children make progress broadly in line with expectations from their starting points, achieving knowledge and skills which are typical for their age by the end of Reception. However, children currently in the class are not making as rapid progress because they are not always given activities which meet their learning needs or challenge them enough.
- While there are indications that teaching has been effective until recently, current arrangements for teaching in this part of the school are not as strong.
- Leadership of the early years provision is shared across the federation. This collaborative arrangement is too recent to have made sufficient impact to ensure good teaching and learning for these children.
- Most children behave well, but when the activities do not interest them, they do not participate as positively as they should. A few do not behave consistently well which occasionally interferes with the learning of other pupils, particularly when they do not have enough to do and so are easily distracted. Adults are learning to manage this but are not always quick to identify and address the underlying causes. Children are helped to understand how they can help to keep themselves safe, and adults are well trained about the procedures and expectations to make sure children are safe.

## 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>	118199
<b>Local authority</b>	Isle of Wight
<b>Inspection number</b>	449103

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>	190
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Katrina Rigby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Tuck
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7–8 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01983 522747
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