

Charlton Church of England Primary School

Barton Road, Dover, Kent, CT16 2LX

Inspection dates

29–30 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher is tireless and uncompromising in her pursuit of excellent achievement for all. Under her leadership, the school has improved dramatically.
- Pupils achieve well because teachers have high expectations of them and provide very good help and guidance on how to improve their work.
- Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are now in line with national averages and improving fast.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals achieve as well as others in the school and did better than other pupils nationally in the 2014 tests of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Young children get off to a good start in Reception. The teaching of their early reading skills has improved and is now a strength.
- Teaching assistants support learning well; some make a striking contribution to pupils' progress.
- Pupils of all ages behave well and take their responsibility for upholding the school's values very seriously. They enact the expectations of kindness, patience, and respect for others, at work and at play.
- The site is transformed from its poor state at the time of the last inspection. It is safe, inviting, and well equipped to encourage play and learning.
- Adults have a keen understanding of their duty and responsibility to keep children safe. They act assiduously to address any concerns and are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Governance has improved markedly since the last inspection and is now a strength. Governors challenge school leaders for continuous improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers are equally skilled in addressing misconceptions, intervening, and moving learning on rapidly to maximise progress.
- Not enough pupils have reached the highest levels of attainment in assessments and tests taken at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classrooms, often jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also made short visits to lessons to look at pupils' work and hear pupils read.
- Inspectors conducted focused learning walks, looking at curriculum development, site safety improvements, and at social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders, teachers, support staff, pupils, and four members of the governing body. The lead inspector also met with representatives from the diocese and the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of discussions with parents, and the views of 32 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire).
- The inspection team scrutinised a number of documents including the school's information on pupils' performance and progress, self-evaluation records, safeguarding policies and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils around the school and during break times, and observed behaviour during playtimes and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Christine Raeside, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Catherine Leahy

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

- Charlton Primary School is slightly smaller than average.
- Most pupils are White British; about one eighth belongs to minority ethnic groups and a growing proportion, currently around one tenth, speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for additional government funding through the pupil premium is below the national average. This additional funding is for pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- Early years provision in the Reception class is full time.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has been granted approval in principle by the Secretary of State to become an academy, joining Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers are as good as the best in the school at moving learning on rapidly, through precise, well-judged intervention and advice.
- Ensure that all groups of pupils make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points, so that standards of attainment consistently meet or exceed national averages, including at the highest levels.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has re-energised learning. Pupils are confident and ambitious to do well. Staff have a shared drive and purpose. Teaching and achievement are improving strongly because expectations are high.
- The headteacher and other leaders demand the best from teachers. They intervene to strengthen areas of weakness and challenge entrenched poor performance head on. Intolerance of weak teaching has led to some staffing turbulence, but the school is now stable and all teachers aspire to excellence.
- Parents are highly positive about how well the school is led and managed and about the improvements in behaviour, safety, teaching and achievement. Some described their children to inspectors as 'thriving' and 'flying', or making 'amazing progress'.
- Leaders of subject areas or year groups play a full part in driving up achievement. They share the headteacher's determination to achieve the best and keenly evaluate the success of their work in order to do better.
- The special educational needs coordinator has had a strong, positive influence on provision for children in need of extra help, in a relatively short space of time. She has reviewed and improved support and ensured that it is carefully targeted at the children who need it most. She tracks and monitors their progress assiduously.
- School leaders ensure that funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used to accelerate their learning. These pupils benefit from extra classes, small support groups, and a continuous focus on English and mathematics skills. Consequently, their attainment in 2014 was stronger than that of other pupils in the school and exceeded national averages for all pupils.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that pupils experience a broad balance of subjects, but with particular emphasis on areas targeted for improvement. Writing, for example, has been a keen focus since the last inspection. This is evident in every lesson and in every part of the school. Teachers promote the writing process and build in time to think about how to write in the correct style, using accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation. Pupils in turn think about and articulate how they will improve their writing. Displays model excellence in writing and provide prompts and checks for ambitious vocabulary and accurate spelling.
- Pupils' experiences of learning are enriched by the Christian values that are central to the school community. Pupils explained to inspectors how seriously they take their responsibility to listen, be patient, respect others and show tolerance and forgiveness. They had no difficulty blending these tenets with others that the school promotes. They see clear links between the school's core values and those of modern democratic Britain. They articulate this as having 'the freedom to choose, think or act', while having responsibility to 'accept and be fair' to people of different faiths and cultures. They learn about other faiths through their religious education lessons and can explain the surface features of the main religions, although they struggle to articulate their understanding further.
- Sport is used effectively to help pupils understand the power of resilience and perseverance. Sport funding is well targeted to provide specialist teaching, including a dedicated physical education teaching assistant. Pupils were inspired by a visit to the school of two Olympic athletes, who impressed on them the need for disciplined healthy eating and regular training if you want to achieve your goals.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements. Staff training in how to recognise and act on signs of risk or harm is regular and effective. The headteacher and governors are proactive in ensuring that staff recruited to the school are properly and thoroughly checked. The headteacher is assiduous in following up and dealing with any safeguarding concerns.
- The local authority conducts regular monitoring visits to the school. The reports arising from these visits are detailed and sharply focused on the key priorities for improvement. School leaders have made excellent use of this support to check and refine their own monitoring and evaluation of the school's progress. Diocesan leaders have maintained an overview of the school's progress and also contribute to its regular monitoring.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is a strength of the school. Governors have been rigorously self-evaluative and relentless in developing their role. They have a strong understanding of assessment information, and know how well the school compares to others locally and nationally. They challenge the headteacher strenuously and from a position of knowledge.
 - Governors know where there are strengths in teaching and where it needs to develop further. They have been active in directing the work of the deputy headteacher to ensure that her coaching role is

keenly targeted on areas of greatest need, resulting in marked improvement.

- Governors hold teachers responsible for the success of all pupils. They reward good teaching but withhold pay progression where targets are not met. They scrutinise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils to ensure that they are as successful as their peers. They have directed pupil premium funding predominantly towards support for English and mathematics so that pupils' key skills are well developed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons, pupils are eager to participate and to learn, and very responsive to adult instruction and direction. They apply themselves to their work and cooperate well when facing a tricky task. They take pride in persevering with problems before seeking help from a teacher.
- Pupils behave well at break and lunch times and are able to manage their play effectively because of the greatly improved facilities in both playgrounds.
- Case studies show improvements in behaviour and attendance for pupils with individual needs or challenges to overcome. Carefully planned intervention is helping these pupils to settle and thrive in school.
- Teaching assistants have a detailed understanding of individual needs and help pupils with challenging behaviour to stay on task, complete their work and experience a sense of achievement. This motivates them to continue to do well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Staff are well trained in how to recognise and act on signs of risk or harm. They act swiftly and appropriately if they are concerned.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of a wide range of risks. For example, they have a very good grasp of e-safety and can explain the potential danger of posting information online which cannot then easily be removed.
- Careful thought, consideration and planning have gone into making the site a safe and educational place to play. Children support one another and take care over one another's safety. They make sensible choices over which physical challenges to attempt, and they respect and value the equipment available to them. Trained Year 6 'play leaders' take great pride in the strong support and supervision they offer younger children.
- Bullying is not tolerated and school leaders deal swiftly and firmly with any incidents that do arise. These are carefully recorded and logs show a marked reduction in the need for sanctions.
- Attendance is above average for all groups of pupils. Good attendance is promoted and encouraged; school leaders are working effectively to reduce absence amongst a small group of pupils whose attendance is lower than that of their peers.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils are effusive about improvements in teaching since the last inspection. They say that teachers organise their lessons so that they are fun, creative, and always introducing new challenges. This is borne out by work in books and by monitoring records.
- Pupils are industrious in lessons and willing to tackle problems of increasing complexity. They express confidence that teachers and other adults will help them, but believe it is their responsibility to 'never give up on their work'.
- Books show a wide range of writing for different purposes, in some cases accomplished and fluent. Teachers mark work purposefully and precisely, opening up conversations with pupils about how to improve and setting small tasks to help them practise key skills. Year 6 pupils were quick to suggest that 'adverbial phrases' and 'more ambitious vocabulary' would improve a piece of writing they were planning.
- Mathematics books show similar evidence of work improving and developing over time, supported by teacher marking. Teachers increasingly insist on high standards of presentation, but some mathematics books were less well set out than others, limiting their usefulness for revision. Pupils describe mathematics as a subject where 'you need to pay close attention to what your teacher is saying', then be prepared to

'keep trying, using lots of different methods' until you reach a solution. They understand well the need to be 'efficient' in their mathematics, using their knowledge to choose the best route to the answer.

- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and by teaching assistants. Teachers plan work at the appropriate level to move learning on, whatever the individual's starting point. Teaching assistants supplement whole class teaching with well-timed, probing questions to small groups or individuals. They make a good contribution generally to learning, but occasionally are strikingly influential in moving learning forward, for example through detailed commentary on pupils' work where their learning needs are complex and significant.
- Children get off to a good start with their reading in the early years; the love of books and reading is fostered throughout the school and pupils of all ages read willingly, including those who struggle with fluency.
- Children who join the school without a knowledge of English pick up early skills quickly because staff pay close and precise attention to their early language needs. There is a keen focus on acquiring the necessary vocabulary to communicate happily and successfully in school.
- Most books are regularly and carefully marked and assessed. There are some highly effective interventions to address misconceptions. However, there are also some remaining examples of more cursory or generalised marking, with less impact on achievement. In lessons, this is mirrored by a predominance of good questioning and re-directing of learning, but also occasions when errors go unnoticed or are not successfully addressed and learning is less effective as a result.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children in Year 1 are now very well prepared for the statutory check of their understanding of letters and sounds because of focused and greatly improved teaching of phonics, consistently applied across Reception, and Years 1 and 2.
- In 2014, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 rose to be in line with the national average, although fewer children reached the highest levels in mathematics and writing than nationally. Boys' writing was below national average and lagged behind that of girls. However, this gap between girls and boys is no longer evident. Boys' progress in all subjects, but notably in reading, is now at least as good as girls'. Standards of writing by the end of Year 2 are strong, with some impressive work in books showing extended and fluent writing, with rapid term-by-term development.
- Year 6 test results in 2014, combining reading, writing and mathematics, were above average; the same measure for disadvantaged pupils, eligible for pupil premium funding, was higher than for non-eligible pupils both in school and nationally.
- Progress measures for 2014 were also greatly improved on the previous year, but there were gaps between boys and girls and between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Disadvantaged pupils did not make as much progress as expected in reading, writing or mathematics. This was indicative of the legacy of weaker teaching and poor overall achievement affecting these pupils' progress over time. Progress in school now, evident in books, lessons and assessment information, shows that these pupils now make progress at least in line with their peers and with all pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points because their individual learning needs are well understood and supported.
- Too few pupils achieved higher than Level 4 in the 2014 tests, showing that more-able pupils have not been stretched and challenged enough. This is changing, although the good progress these pupils are now making in class has not yet been realised in higher levels of attainment in national tests. Predictions for 2015 and beyond show significant improvement at the higher levels; the reliability of previous tracking and assessment, along with good progress in books, lends confidence to this evaluation.
- Pupil progress meetings are testing and rigorous. The headteacher leads this regular scrutiny of performance, ably supported by the deputy and the special educational needs coordinator. The rigorous and forensic nature of this routine checking for improvement is driving up achievement; there is a belief that every child can and will succeed. Assessments are checked for accuracy by external moderators.

The early years provision

is good

- The Early Years Foundation Stage has undergone a transformation since the previous inspection. Children enjoy learning in their well-resourced, vibrant classroom and outdoor environment. Teaching staff plan exciting and engaging learning opportunities. This supports children in developing their imagination,

independence and enthusiasm for learning.

- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. Teachers carefully identify children's strengths and their needs when the children start school. They use frequent and detailed observations to check on their progress and plan their next steps. This rigorous approach ensures children learn to cooperate together and achieve well. They make good progress in most areas of learning. The proportion achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception is above that found nationally.
- Children start school with weaker skills in reading and writing. Teaching staff have recognised this area for development and place a high priority on the teaching of letters and sounds. The writing area is inviting and sparks children's curiosity. The children choose to practise their skills, learn to write independently and develop a love of books.
- Parents play an active part in their children's learning. They regularly contribute to their child's 'learning journey', which strengthens links between home and school. Parents told inspectors they value the detailed information they receive from the school. They say the teaching staff are approachable and provide very good care and support for their child. This is making a positive contribution to the good progress their children are making.
- Children in the Reception class behave well. They learn to listen to the teachers and to each other. For example, during the 'discovery session' observed during the inspection, every child was absorbed in their learning. Teaching assistants support children effectively in developing their independent learning and social skills. However, on occasions, opportunities are missed to develop children's thinking and understanding even further.
- Adults provide high quality support for disadvantaged children and those identified with special educational needs. This enables these children to make good progress from their low starting points, particularly in developing speaking and listening skills.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader works closely with teachers in Key Stage 1 to ensure children are well prepared to move successfully into Year 1.
- Children play and learn safely; adults are vigilant and well trained in ensuring that children are kept safe in school.

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	118747
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	446296

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sinead Coveney
Headteacher	Kim Werth
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 October 2013
Telephone number	01304 201275
Fax number	01304 219238
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